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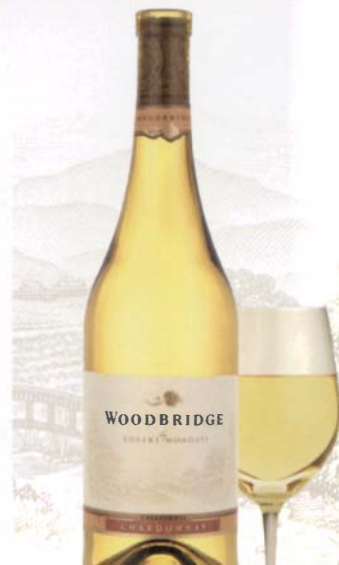
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AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2005 ISSUE 73



PULLOUTS

10b A Dozen Summer Essentials

Pestos, vinaigrettes, and rubs to make ahead

86c Quick & Delicious



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Sirloin Tacos with Roasted Tomato Salsa

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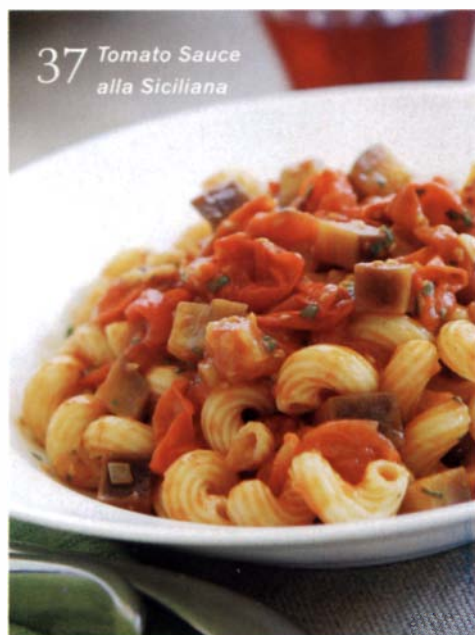


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67 Triple Chocolate Ice Cream Pie

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Cook your way around the world

Even if you're not traveling to distant lands this summer, you can still feast at the global table. These ethnic menus are great for midweek family suppers and casual get-togethers because the flavors are different enough to keep things interesting, yet familiar enough to keep everyone happy. Before you start cooking, be sure to check the yield of every recipe; you might have to double or triple a recipe if you're cooking for a crowd.

Casual summer entertaining

A Mediterranean Cookout

Four make-aheads—the eggplant caponata, the onion marmalade, the spice rub for the grilled chicken, and the dough for the tart—mean this flavorful feast is easy to create.

Sweet & Sour Eggplant Caponata (p. 70) with pita chips or crisps

Moroccan Grilled Chicken Breast Sandwiches with Onion Marmalade (p. 42)

Potato Salad with Green Beans, Red Peppers & Olives (p. 86c)

Rustic Peach & Cinnamon Tart (p. 51)

TO DRINK: A crisp, refreshing rosé from the Loire or Provence.

Mostly Tex-Mex Fiesta

If you have time to plan ahead, this could actually be a mid-week dinner party. A few days before, make the ice-cream pie and the roasted tomato salsa. The night before, roast the poblanos and make the dry rub for the steak. Just before your guests arrive, make the avocado salsa and fire up the grill.

Poblano & Ham Quesadillas (p. 61)

Sirloin Tacos with Roasted Tomato Salsa (p. 65)

Avocado Salsa (p. 40)

Triple Chocolate Ice Cream Pie (p. 67)

TO DRINK: Put out a selection of amber ale and Mexican beers.

Vibrant weeknight duos

Any one of these pairings, plus a crusty loaf or a plate of ripe garden vegetables, makes a lovely meal. As for dessert, you can't go wrong with store-bought ice cream and our Quick Hot Fudge Sauce on p. 67.

Quick Italian

Tomato Sauce alla Siciliana (p. 37) over cavatappi pasta

Mixed greens with Black Olive & Mint Vinaigrette (p. 10a)

TO DRINK: A medium-bodied Italian red with good acidity, like Barbera or Chianti.

A Taste of Greece

Baked Shrimp with Fennel & Feta (p. 86c)

Spicy & Citrusy Couscous Salad (p. 43)

TO DRINK: An unoaked Sauvignon Blanc from California or New Zealand with good acidity and tasty fruit flavors.

From Spain to Argentina

Yellow Tomato Gazpacho (p. 40)

Argentine-Style Hamburger (p. 49)

TO DRINK: Try a young, fruity Malbec from Argentina that's not too tannic.

Everybody's All-American

Summer Corn Soup (p. 18)

Bourbon & Brown Sugar Marinated Steak (p. 86c)

TO DRINK: Keep it easygoing with beer, or try a medium- to full-bodied red wine with up-front fruit notes, like Zinfandel.

The essential place setting



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READER SERVICE NO. 29

from the editor

Sunday strategy

This summer, I've got a plan, and I'm sticking to it. Every Sunday, after waffles and coffee and newspaper reading and dog-tummy scratching, I'm going to put my apron on and do a little cooking. Nothing too exhausting, just enough to leave me with two or three killer "secret ingredients" to make my weeknight dinners more exciting and quicker to pull together. With this August issue of *Fine Cooking* in hand, I've got endless options.

First, I'll make my favorite easiest condiment ever—Lemon Oil—and I might make the intensely toasty flavored Paprika-Chile Oil, too. A drizzle of either turns grilled fish or steak into something much more interesting. I'll take two minutes to mix up the Memphis Spice Rub; I might simmer a batch of Onion Marmalade, and I'll definitely whiz together the Chimichurri Sauce (any of these add a kick to grilled chicken). One weekend, I'll make the Roasted Tomato Salsa (add tortillas, skirt steak, and sour cream for a taco dinner). And when I run out of one batch of the Ginger-Sesame-Honey Lime Vinaigrette, I'll definitely be making another. With its explosion of Asian flavors, it's the perfect thing to bring together main-dish grilled seafood and vegetable salads.

In case I have drop-in guests (emergency dessert required), I'll make Quick Hot Fudge Sauce for ice cream. If I'm planning a party for the next weekend, I'll make the Triple Chocolate Ice Cream Pie and pop it in the freezer, or a batch of Rustic Tart Dough to freeze and fill with Saturday's farmers' market fruit.

I'll feel so satisfied with my loot, that I'll take the rest of the day off.

—Susie Middleton, editor

from our readers

Hold on to those issues

I have now bought my third issue of *Fine Cooking* #72. After tasting the Slivered Red Pepper, Carrot & Snap Pea Salad, my sister made off with my first magazine. I had to leave my second purchase with my mother, who needed it to prepare the Seared Scallops for my father. I'm not letting the third issue out of my sight. The salads have been delicious and the Summer Rolls extremely tasty. I plan on making the Grilled Chicken Wings for dinner tonight, but I'm not inviting anyone

over in case my third copy goes out the door. Keep up the great work!

—Ursula Hewson, via email

Love the meatballs, but hold the salt

I have just made the spaghetti and meatballs in *Fine Cooking* #71. I encountered only one problem. The marinara sauce was extremely salty. The meatballs were fabulous and were enjoyed in spite of the sauce.

—Terry O'Flynn, via email

Editors' reply: We've heard from a few readers who found

Frank Pellegrino's marinara sauce too salty. We tested the recipe again to double-check the amount, and all of our tasters found the sauce pleasingly seasoned. There are a few factors that might explain why some results differed from ours. First, we've found a great range in sodium content among brands of canned Italian tomatoes, from 15 mg to 270 mg per serving. Second, if the marinara simmers vigorously or reduces much further than the recipe suggests, its saltiness will increase. Finally, there's personal preference.

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Fine Cooking: (ISSN: 1072-5121) is published bimonthly, with a special seventh issue in the winter, by The Taunton Press, Inc., Newtown, CT 06470-5506. Telephone 203-426-8171. Periodicals postage paid at Newtown, CT 06470 and at additional mailing offices. GST paid registration #123210981.

Subscription Rates: U.S. and Canada, \$29.95 for one year, \$49.95 for two years, \$69.95 for three years (GST included, payable in U.S. funds). Outside the U.S./Canada: \$36 for one year, \$62 for two years, \$88 for three years (payable in U.S. funds). Single copy, \$6.95. Single copy outside the U.S., \$7.95.

Postmaster: Send address changes to *Fine Cooking*, The Taunton Press, Inc., 63 South Main St., P.O. Box 5506, Newtown, CT 06470-5506.

Canada Post: Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to *Fine Cooking*, c/o Worldwide Mailers, Inc., 2744 Edna St., Windsor, ON N8Y 1V2, or email to mnfa@taunton.com.

Printed in the USA.

HOW TO CONTACT US:

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Newtown, CT 06470-5506 203-426-8171
www.finecooking.com

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READER SERVICE NO. 65

We each have our own level of salt tolerance (many of our tasters fall on the well-salted end of the spectrum), which is why our recipes often say to add salt to taste. The solution is to start with 1 tablespoon kosher salt in the marinara instead of 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons. If it needs more, you can always add it after simmering.

A few readers have asked whether the 1½ cups of water in the meatball recipe is correct. It is, but the key is to use store-bought plain dry breadcrumbs, which are very fine, rather than fresh crumbs or panko. We used 4C brand in all our tests.

A crumbly cheese to the rescue

In *Fine Cooking* #72, a reader wrote to Q&A about fresh goat cheese that doesn't crumble when you try to do so. A possibility would be to

seek out an Hispanic grocery and buy *queso cotija*, which can come in a dry, very crumbled form. It sprinkles nicely and can be incorporated into soups or sauces, or you can use it in salads or pasta. It keeps for quite a long time and has been a boon to us when we need a quick tangy enhancement.

—Gary Hauser, Union, Iowa

Erratum

The recipe for strawberry crisp in *Fine Cooking* #72 (p. 67) needs only ½ cup confectioner's sugar. At one point, we considered topping the crisp with whipped cream lightly sweetened with confectioners' sugar. Later we decided that we'd prefer a simple drizzle of heavy cream or a scoop of vanilla ice cream, but we failed to remove the extra 2 tablespoons of confectioner's sugar from the ingredient list. ♦



We won!

In the culinary world, there are two prestigious annual awards that a cookbook can win. One set of awards is given by the International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP) and the other by the James Beard Foundation.

This year, *Fine Cooking's* first cookbook, *Cooking New*

American, was nominated for both an IACP award (in the compilations category) and a James Beard award (in the American category). And long-time *Fine Cooking* contributing editor, Molly Stevens, was also nominated for both awards (in the single-subject category) for her phenomenal book, *All About Braising*.

While it's a great honor just to be nominated for either one of these (not to mention both), *Cooking New American* went on to win its category in the IACP awards, and *All About Braising* won both the James Beard and IACP awards for best single-subject cookbook of the year. We're understandably proud of Molly and of everyone at The Taunton Press who worked on *Cooking New American*. Congratulations!

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READER SERVICE NO. 24

Domenica Marchetti ("Fresh Tomato Sauces," p. 34) is a former newspaper reporter who covered crime, local politics, health, fitness, and philanthropy before it finally dawned on her that what she really wanted to write about was food. Her first cookbook, *Four Seasons of Italian Soups & Stews*, is due out from Chronicle in the fall of 2006.

Stu Stein ("A Leisurely Picnic," p. 38) is the culinary director and executive chef of King Estate Winery in Eugene, Oregon. He travels the country, teaching cooking classes and singing the praises of locally grown, in-season ingredients. Stu wrote *The Sustainable Kitchen: Passionate Cooking Inspired by Farms, Forests, and Oceans*.

Joanne Weir ("Grilling a Whole Chicken," p. 44) has written seven cookbooks, including the recently re-released *From Tapas to Meze* and *Weir Cooking in the City*, which is a companion to her PBS television series of the same name. Joanne learned the ropes during her five years at Chez Panisse restaurant in Berkeley and a year of study with master cooking instructor Madeleine Kamman.

Waldy Malouf ("Grilling a Whole Chicken," p. 44) is an award-winning chef who worked at some of New York City's top restaurants before opening the highly acclaimed Beacon Restaurant in 1999. At Beacon, he focuses on his favorite cooking technique: open-fire cooking. Waldy has written two books, *High Heat* and *The Hudson River Valley Cookbook*.

When **Bob Sloan** ("Burger," p. 48) isn't dreaming up ideas for delicious new burgers, he teaches theater at The Dalton School in

Manhattan. Bob is the author of six cookbooks, including *Dad's Own Cookbook*, *Great Burgers*, and the forthcoming *Tailgating Cookbook*.

To **Joanne Chang** ("Rustic Summer Fruit Tarts," p. 50), one of the best things about making fruit galettes is that they're so forgiving. "I use a coffee cup and a soup spoon to measure out the fruit and sugar," she says. An alumna of Rialto, Payard Pâtisserie, and Mistral, Joanne is now the chef-owner of Boston's Flour Bakery + Café.

When frequent *Fine Cooking* contributor **Elizabeth Karmel** decided to get more vegetables into her life, she created salads that incorporate the smoky-sweet grilled flavors she adores. The results are the smashing recipes in "Fire Up the Grill for Great Summer Salads" (p. 55). Elizabeth is the author of *Taming the Flame: Secrets for Hot-and-Quick Grilling and Low-and-Slow BBQ*.

Robb Walsh ("Chiles," p. 60) has a lot to say about fresh chiles, as a former editor in chief of *Chile Pepper Magazine*. A two-time James Beard award winner and the restaurant critic of the Houston Press, Robb is also the author of *The Tex-Mex Cookbook: A History in Recipes and Photos*, which was nominated this year for an IACP cookbook award.

Lori Longbotham ("Ice Cream Pie," p. 66) is a food writer and the author of several cookbooks, including *Luscious Chocolate Desserts* and, most recently, *The Scoop: How to Change Store-Bought Ice Cream into Fabulous Desserts*. In her 25 years in the food business, she has worked as a chef, caterer, recipe tester and developer, and food editor.



Joanne Chang



Stu Stein



Domenica Marchetti



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Sweet Corn is a Summer Treasure

BY RUTH LIVELY

Sweet corn tops my list of vegetables I simply will not buy when it isn't in season and isn't locally grown. It's a long wait from the end of September to the following July, but it's worth it when I sink my teeth into an earful of plump kernels bursting with sweet, corny flavor.

The sugars in old-fashioned sweet corn varieties quickly turn to starch once the ears are picked, which puts the truth in the old line that you should pick the corn only once the kettle of water is at the boil. But plant breeding has led to sweeter corn varieties as well as corn that retains its sugars for longer after it's been harvested. The first improvement was the introduction of what the trade calls "sugar-enhanced" varieties. Then along came "supersweet" corn varieties, whose smaller, crisper kernels are very much sweeter and stay so for even longer. In my opinion, supersweet corn delivers an overdose of sweet and not enough corny flavor, although I do like its stay-crisp, non-creamy texture in salsas and relishes. Of course, when you're buying corn, you often only have one choice of variety and it's frequently not labeled as

Off the cob, corn goes with nearly everything

At the start of corn season, I want nothing more than plain boiled corn on the cob with butter and salt. After a while, I'm ready to integrate the kernels into other dishes. Corn goes well with most summer vegetables and herbs. Any time a recipe is based on cornmeal, consider adding fresh corn kernels.

Toss together a corn salsa with grilled corn (cut off the kernels after grilling), diced tomatoes, red onions, and roasted red peppers. Season with minced jalapeño and garlic, a touch of minced chipotle, and plenty of chopped cilantro. Moisten with olive oil and fresh lime juice.

Stir fresh corn kernels into cornbread or corn muffins to punch up the corn flavor.

Make a rich, cheesy corn polenta by cooking coarse cornmeal in chicken stock, then stirring in ricotta and grated Parmesan, corn kernels, and fresh thyme.

Make a southwestern-style sauté of diced onion, diced summer squash, diced sweet pepper, corn, minced garlic, and minced jalapeño, seasoned with a dash of cumin. Garnish with diced avocado and a squeeze of lime juice, or a scattering of grated smoked mozzarella or smoked Gouda. Use leftovers as a filling for tacos or quesadillas.

Build a pretty salad of thinly sliced cucumbers, beets, and red onion on a bed of butter lettuce. Scatter corn kernels and crumbled feta over all and dress with a lemony vinaigrette with chopped dill.

For an elegant brunch dish, bake a savory tart filled with a mix of raw corn, sautéed diced bell pepper and onion, sautéed sliced mushrooms, and chopped blanched spinach, all bound with beaten eggs and a big spoonful of creamy ricotta or goat cheese.

Keep fresh kernels at the ready

Here's a simple way to preserve the sweetness of fresh corn and to keep corn kernels on hand for tossing into salads, side dishes, sautés, or other weeknight dishes. Cut the kernels off the cobs and blanch them in boiling water for 1 or 2 minutes. Drain, let cool, and store in a covered container in the fridge for up to five days. Or freeze the kernels in a single layer on a baking sheet until hard, and then store in an airtight container in the freezer, where they'll keep for up to three months.



Epicurious.com called it:

“Beyond compare...satisfyingly salty but also well-rounded. There's a pleasant hint of caramel in the flavor, and a toasty complexity that really sets it apart from the others we tried...this sauce has a nice body and very good balance of flavor.”

Did we mention it's a soy sauce?



For great soy sauce recipes, visit kikkoman-usa.com.

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anything but fresh corn. If you're buying at a local stand, the seller will likely be able to fill you in on the variety.

Despite all the genetic improvements, the main tricks to good corn eating are still to buy it as fresh as you can and to cook and eat it promptly. When choosing corn, look for ears with moist, fresh-looking husks. Don't worry about browning silks, which are the farmer's cue that the corn is ready to pick. Feel the ears to suss out how plump they are and whether the rows of kernels are fully formed. It's bad manners to strip the ears to check out the kernels and then not to buy the ear you've disturbed. You can, however, gently part the ends of the husks at the ear tip and take a peek at what's inside. If you like what you see, buy that ear and take the rest on faith.

Back home, don't shuck the corn until you're ready to use it. If you're not going to cook it all that day, stow the ears in the refrigerator, loosely wrapped in a dry plastic bag.

Ruth Lively cooks, gardens, and writes in New Haven, Connecticut.

Summer Corn Soup

Yields 6 to 7 cups; serves six.

5 to 6 large ears sweet corn, shucked, silks removed
Kosher salt
3 tablespoons olive oil or unsalted butter, or a combination
1 large onion, diced
4 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
½ cup diced celery
1 medium red potato (6 ounces), peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
3 to 4 sprigs fresh marjoram, leaves stripped and chopped (1 tablespoon loosely packed leaves)
Freshly ground black pepper
Pinch cayenne
¼ cup sour cream, for garnish
½ cup finely diced fresh tomatoes, for garnish
¼ cup thinly sliced fresh basil, for garnish

Cut the kernels off the ears of corn by starting to cut halfway down the ear and slicing to the bottom, rotating the ear as you go; don't try to cut too close to the base of the kernels. Turn the ear over and repeat to remove all the kernels. You'll need 3½ to 4 cups of kernels for the soup.

Stand one cob on end in a pie plate or other shallow dish and use the back edge of the knife to scrape the cobs and extract as much "milk" and solids as you can. Set this raw corn purée aside.

Break the cobs in half and put them in a heavy 4-quart pot. Add 6 cups water and 1 teaspoon salt and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium low, cover, and simmer for 30 minutes. Discard the cobs. Pour the liquid into a bowl and set aside.

Set the pot back over medium-high heat and add the oil or butter (or both). When it's hot, add the onion and sauté until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute. Reduce the heat to medium, add the celery, sprinkle with salt, and stir. Cover the pot and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables start to soften, 5 to 6 minutes; don't let them color. (If they start to brown before softening, reduce the heat.) Add the potatoes, marjoram, black pepper (about 6 turns of the grinder), and cayenne and stir to distribute the seasonings. Add the corn stock. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, cover, lower the heat to medium low, and simmer until the vegetables are tender enough to purée, 20 to 30 minutes. Add most of the corn kernels, reserving about 1 cup. Simmer gently for another 10 minutes.

Purée the soup in batches in a blender (be careful to fill the blender no more than one-third full and hold a towel



More garnish ideas

Try any of these instead of, or in addition to, the tomatoes, basil, and sour cream in the soup recipe:

- ❖ crème fraîche
- ❖ fresh marjoram or thyme leaves
- ❖ snipped fresh chives
- ❖ a drizzle of basil oil
- ❖ raw or seared corn kernels
- ❖ toasted pepitas
- ❖ a sprinkle of smoky Spanish paprika (pimentón)
- ❖ thinly sliced fresh jalapeño or serrano

over the lid while you turn it on). Put the puréed soup back in the pot. Taste for seasoning and add more salt or pepper if necessary. Add the reserved corn kernels and corn "milk," and simmer just long enough to take the raw edge off the corn, about 5 minutes. Serve hot, warm, or at room temperature, garnished with a small dollop of sour cream and the tomatoes and basil. ♦

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When a recipe calls for using a dry white wine, what are my options? Can a Chardonnay work?

—Melissa Baird, via email

A Tim Gaiser responds: The best white wines for cooking are those that are dry and that don't have too much oak or alcohol (anything below 14% is good). Look for crisp, light- to medium-bodied white wines like Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio, Sémillon, or dry Chenin Blanc. A Chardonnay can work, as long as it doesn't have too much oak.

Another important guideline: Choose a wine that's good enough to drink on its own. A poor-quality wine will bring down the overall flavor of the dish.

Tim Gaiser, a contributing editor to Fine Cooking, is a master sommelier.

however, you lose those rich, dark pan drippings that are the foundation for a flavorful sauce or gravy.

You can also butterfly the chicken by cutting out its back, flattening it, and roasting it in the pan. Because the chicken is roasting flat and low to the pan, the drippings don't have as far to fall, therefore reducing (though not eliminating) the amount of spattering fat.

Pam Anderson is a contributing editor to Fine Cooking and a cookbook author. Her next book, Perfect Recipes for Having People Over, will be out this fall.

I'm concerned about buying overfished seafood. How can I find out which ones are considered environmentally friendly?

—Jesse Avila, via email

A Karen Jeffries responds: Many fish and other seafood are being caught faster than they can reproduce. As a result, some of our favorite seafood, such as Atlantic cod and Chilean sea bass, are disappearing. Other overfished species include sharks and bluefin tuna. The good news is that there are other great seafood options at supermarkets and in restaurants that aren't at risk. For a comprehensive guide to which fish are abundant and also being fished or farmed in sustainable ways, visit the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch web site at Seafoodwatch.org. There, a consumer's guide lists your best choices, good alternatives, and what to avoid. It's designed to be printed as a wallet-size card, so you can have the list handy when you're at the market or dining out.

Karen Jeffries is a spokeswoman for the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California, whose mission is to inspire the conservation of the oceans. ♦

What is the best way to keep my grill grates clean?

—Beth Marlin, via email

A Elizabeth Karmel responds: The trick to maintaining clean grill grates is to brush them when they're very hot. For a gas grill, the best time to do this is just before grilling. Turn all the burners to high and let the grill heat with the lid down for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the internal grill temperature is higher than 500°F. This burns off the residue from the last cookout, making it much easier to brush off with a brass-bristle grill brush (steel bristles are too hard and can damage enamel-coated grates). If you have a lot of accumulated buildup on your gas grill grates, you'll need to allow more time to burn off the residue, so let the grill heat up on high for a full hour before brushing.

For charcoal grills, burn off any residue on the grates right after grilling. Just set the lid on the grill and, as the hot coals burn out, any residue should burn off. Then brush before the next use.

When you're brushing the grates, don't be afraid to use some elbow grease. You want the surface of the grates to be smooth and free from any food that may have stuck the last time. This prevents the buildup of charred food on the grates and helps ensure that the food you're about to cook won't stick.

Elizabeth Karmel is the author of Taming the Flame: Secrets to Hot-and-Quick Grilling and Low-and-Slow BBQ.

I like to roast my chicken in a high-heat oven, but it makes a mess. Is there a way to minimize the spatter?

—Cheryl Phelps, Seattle, Washington

A Pam Anderson responds: It's the melting chicken fat hitting the hot roasting pan that causes spattering. Here are two options for reducing it. You can roast the chicken on a rack set over a thin layer of water in the roasting pan. The water prevents the dripping fat from spattering. With this method,

Have a question of general interest about cooking? Send it to Q&A, Fine Cooking, PO Box 5506, Newtown, CT 06470-5506, or by email to fc@taunton.com, and we'll find a cooking professional with the answer.

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THE ART OF GOOD COOKING

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3 new tools for better pies and pastries

For novice bakers, and even for some seasoned ones, making and rolling out pie crust can be a nerve-wracking experience. How much to cut in the butter? Is the dough getting too warm? Will it roll out nicely? Fear not. Three new pastry-making tools are here to ease your pie anxiety.

A novel pastry blender. Before testing it, I wouldn't have believed that a gadget that looks and acts like a potato masher could double as a great pastry blender. But after making countless batches of scones and pie dough with the Gourmet Blender, I'm a believer.

Like traditional pastry blenders, this one employs metal tines to cut the butter into small pieces while incorporating them into the flour. But the similarity ends there. The Gourmet Blender's tines are rigid blades, and they're much more efficient than the flimsy wires in conventional pastry blenders. I love the blender's comfy, vertical handle because it requires a stomping motion rather than a rocking one to blend ingredients. That takes less effort and is much easier on my increasingly arthritic hands.

The Gourmet Blender is available at Surlatable.com for \$16.95, as well as at many independent kitchen stores (call Best Manufacturers at 800-500-1528 to find a retailer near you). The same company also makes the Pastry Pro, a similar tool with a horizontal handle that's more in line with a traditional pastry blender. It works fine, but I prefer the Gourmet Blender's upright handle.

An ergonomic rolling pin. I was surprised when I tried the new Vic Firth Comfort Pin and fell in love (well, at least in serious like!). It's a traditional pin with a solid maple barrel and stainless-steel ball bearings, which some bakers like but isn't my style (a no-nonsense wooden cylinder is my go-to pin). But the handles on this pin won me over. They may look awkward, but they're remarkably comfortable. My hands slid naturally into position. This pin has one drawback, however: The barrel is only 11½ inches long, a bit on the short side. I found that it was easier to roll out dough in smaller batches to avoid having dough clog up on the ends. The Comfort Pin is \$46 at Vicfirthgourmet.com.

A stay-cold pastry board. Rolling out pie crust in the middle of summer can be tricky because as the dough warms up, it gets sticky. Kuhn Rikon's Big Chill pastry board tackles the problem with ice packs that fit beneath the 16-inch-square plastic board. The cool surface keeps sticking to a minimum and also helps ensure flaky baked crusts (the butter in the dough must stay cool and solid to produce flakes).

My one caveat: The board sometimes slid around my counter during rolling. Sliding a damp paper towel or two under each of the board's footings solved this small glitch and kept the board skidproof.

The Big Chill pastry board is \$25 at Cutleryandmore.com.

—Abigail Johnson Dodge, contributing editor



The Gourmet Blender, Big Chill pastry board, and Comfort Pin all make it easier to achieve flaky pie crust and pastries.

An outdoor griddle that brings people together



Author Charles Miller shows Fine Cooking staffers why he loves his Evo grill—it's incredibly versatile and roomy.

I have a first-rate conventional gas grill at home, but for summer entertaining, I tend to favor my Evo Flattop Grill for cooking. The Evo is a big, circular griddle, and because it doesn't really have a front and a back, it encourages people to gather around it and participate in the cooking.

Two concentric burners under the 30-inch-diameter cooking surface can pump out 48,000 Btu. But they're hidden from view and never come in contact with the food, so grease flare-ups aren't an issue. The top is slightly convex, directing drippings to the encircling grease trap.

You can crank the griddle up to 630°F, plenty hot enough to make a stir-fry or sear a piece of meat. Or you can dial it wayback to gently heat up a bunch of tortillas. The big cooking surface is perfect for several pizzas, rows

of kebabs, or a double batch of pancakes. By covering food such as fish or vegetables with a tall lid (I use the top of my turkey roasting pan), the Evo becomes a baker. Or you can sprinkle a few chunks of hardwood on the griddle, cover it with the Evo's big lid, and create a smoker. You can even use pots and pans on it.

The Evo isn't perfect. It won't impart that smoky backdrop to foods cooked with real wood charcoal (but neither will it drive guests away with smoke clouds). The huge lid can be cumbersome, and it could use a loop on its rim for hanging. And it's expensive. At \$2,600 for the 30-inch stand-alone model, the Evo is among the more expensive grills. To learn more about Evos, visit Evogrill.com or call 866-626-1802.

—Charles Miller, *special-issues editor at Fine Homebuilding*

grilling with charcoal

Rate your charcoal

While testing recipes for whole grilled chicken (p. 44), we found that various brands of hardwood lump charcoal have different compositions and burn rates. If you're curious about how the brand you use compares to others, visit Lump-charcoal.com, a site that has reviewed and ranked more than forty brands of charcoal.

You'll never need lighter fluid again

Lighting my charcoal grill used to require a lot of time, a little luck, and an unsavory dose of lighter fluid. The chimney starter put an end to that. It's just a metal canister with a wire rack inside, but it works brilliantly. Stuff a couple of sheets of crumpled newspaper in the bottom, pour the charcoal in the top, set it on the grill, and light the paper. Without fail, the charcoal ignites. When the coals

are covered in ash, pour them into the grill.

If you grill with charcoal and haven't yet tried a chimney starter, do yourself a favor: Buy one. Get the biggest one you can find, like Weber's extra-large chimney starter (model 87886); it holds enough charcoal for a 22½-inch kettle grill. Hardware stores usually carry chimney starters. The one shown here is \$13 at Thegadgetsource.com.

—Sarah Jay,
managing editor



Induction: A new way to power your cooking

There's a different kind of cooktop that's neither gas nor traditional electric—it's called induction. With its smooth, sleek appearance, an induction cooktop looks a lot like an electric smoothtop, yet it works quite differently.

How does it work?

With induction, it's the pan, not the cooktop, that's the actual heat source. This might sound a bit like voodoo, but it's pretty simple. Usually powered by a 240-volt hookup, induction works like this: When an electric current passes through the element below the surface of an induction cooktop, a magnetic field is created. When a metal pan comes in contact with this magnetic field, the pan's molecules get activated and create heat. But the cooktop itself generates no heat.

Is an induction burner as powerful as gas or electric?

"Burner" is a bit of a misnomer, as the element isn't producing heat. The short answer is yes, induction is just as powerful (see the box at right), but it's not easy to make a straight comparison. While there is a formula for comparing the watts of an induction cooktop to the Btu of a gas burner, it gets complicated because this formula doesn't account for the amount of heat that's lost to the kitchen with gas (or traditional electric) cooktops. Since with induction it's the pan that provides the heat, very little heat is radiated out and thus lost, making induction cooking more efficient.

Are the burners responsive?

With the controls on an induction cooktop, you're adjusting the heat by increasing or decreasing the amount of magnetic energy transmitted to the pan. Our experience is that the

response is as immediate as cooking with gas (see the box at right).

Is it safe?

There's no open flame to catch fire. The glass surface of an induction cooktop will get hot from contact with a hot pan, but the model we tested (see the box at right) cools down quickly enough so that no warning light is needed on the surface.

Speaking of a cooler cooktop, another benefit is cleanup: Spills don't get cooked onto an induction cooktop's quick-cooling surface, so they won't adhere as stubbornly as they would on an electric or gas stove.

Do I need special pans?

Pans need to be made of magnetic metal. An induction cooktop will work with cast-iron, enameled cast-iron, and some stainless-steel pans, including top-quality brands like All-Clad, Viking, and Le Creuset. Copper and anodized-aluminum pans won't work. You can use a simple test to see if your pans are induction-friendly: If a refrigerator magnet adheres to the bottom of the pan, the pan will work on an induction cooktop.

What are the downsides?

Induction cooktops aren't as widely available as gas or electric, and they don't come cheap: most four- and five-burner cooktops ring in between \$3,000 and \$4,000 (though prices are coming down), and two-burner cooktops range from about \$1,400 to \$3,000.

—Amy Albert, senior editor



With an induction cooktop, the pan heats up very, very fast, but the cooktop itself produces no heat.

Induction road test reveals fast, responsive technology

We cooked on a Diva de Provence induction cooktop to see how it handled. The heat settings are in touchpad form, rather than dial, and go from 0 to 12 in intensity. We simmered tomato sauce in a wide, shallow pan and got even bubbling and an impressively low simmer. We were able to quickly and evenly heat a sauté pan to get a nice sear on a panful of chicken breasts.

To check response time, we brought a saucepan of milk to the point of almost boiling over, turned the heat down, and left the pot on the cooktop. The pan cooled so quickly that the milk didn't boil over—the induction cooktop's response time easily matched that of a gas burner.

Finally, we boiled 8 quarts of cool water using the same stockpot on gas, electric, and induction cooktops, all at the highest setting. The water took 24 minutes to come to a rolling boil on a 12,500 Btu gas burner, it took 18½ minutes on electric, and it took only 14½ minutes on induction. —A. A.

To watch a video of induction in action, visit Finecooking.com. For more information, see *Where to Buy It*, p. 82.

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Testing criteria:

We tested eight widely available ice cream makers under \$100 and evaluated each for the quality of the finished ice cream and sorbet, how long the canister or disk stayed cold, ease of use, and noise (listed in order of importance). The other ice cream makers in the review included (in alphabetical order): Deni Ice Cream Maker (5152), Rival Gel Canister Ice Cream Maker (GC8151-WN), Villaware Ice Cream Maker (5100), and Wilton's Incredible Ice Cream Machine.

review:

The scoop on ice cream makers

BY MARYELLEN DRISCOLL

What I remember about making ice cream as a kid—besides the delicious results—is the puddle of melting ice and rock salt that the machine left on the kitchen floor, and the sore elbows we all had after taking turns at the crank. Today's ice cream makers have changed all that—no workout, no mess, just the unrivaled creamy-refreshing flavor of homemade ice cream.

The most popular models on the market today all have similar designs. In most cases, a motorized base rotates a canister that you've frozen in advance. You pour the ice cream mixture into the canister, and it immediately starts to freeze onto the canister's sides. A fixed paddle scrapes the sides as the canister turns, and in 20 to 30 minutes, the ice cream is frozen (though still soft). It's the same principle behind

the old-fashioned machines, except that, instead of using salt and ice to keep the canister cold, most modern machines use a double-walled canister with a chemical coolant sealed inside.

As we found out after testing eight machines (six electric and two manual), despite design similarities, there were performance differences. For some, the canisters just couldn't stay cold long enough, resulting in a softer, sometimes sloppy ice cream. For others, the machine incorporated too much air into the mixture, in some cases creating ice cream with the consistency of frozen whipped cream. After making batch upon batch of plain vanilla ice cream, vanilla with crushed Oreos, and lemon sorbet, the four machines featured here stood out as our favorite choices.

Maryellen Driscoll is Fine Cooking's editor at large.

For perfect results, beat the heat

The key to excellent homemade ice cream is to keep things cool at every step:

- ❖ Freeze the canister (or disk) overnight in the back of the freezer, where it tends to be coldest. If you hear liquid sloshing inside the canister when you shake it, it needs more freezer time.
- ❖ Refrigerate the ice cream mixture until it's completely chilled (ideally 38°F) before freezing in the machine. The colder your mixture, the slower the canister will lose its chill, and the better the ice cream will freeze.
- ❖ Don't remove the canister from the freezer until you're about to pour in the ice cream mixture.
- ❖ Unless you like your ice cream the slumping consistency of soft serve, plan on hardening it in your freezer for at least a few hours or overnight. Transfer to shallow containers for faster freezing.

the winners

Innovative, compact design

Salton Big Chill Ice Cream Maker

model ICM21

\$39.95 at Tabletools.com

1-quart capacity

Instead of a frozen canister, this electric machine uses a frozen disk to chill the ice cream. The thick disk sits on the bottom of a plastic rotating bowl and, surprisingly, is just as efficient at freezing as a frozen canister. It also stays cold longer and occupies less space in your freezer. The hole on top (for pouring in the ice cream mixture and adding flavor extras) has a cap to help keep warm air out and cold air in. This machine is rather loud. Citrus zest will accumulate around the mixing blade when making sorbet, but since the final product tends to be soft, it's easy to disperse by stirring.



Smooth operator

Girmi Ice Cream Machine

model GL 14 US

\$49.99 at Goodmans.net

1-quart capacity

This electric machine's rotating canister retains its cold temperature better than most, producing a lemon sorbet with a full-bodied, creamy texture in 20 minutes. Ice cream can be on the airy side when first made but settles with an overnight freeze into a pleasant, smooth, light texture. The lid has a large hole for adding the ice cream mixture and add-ins and is made of clear plastic, so that you can easily monitor the ice cream's progress. Operation is straightforward.



For large batches

Cuisinart Pure Indulgence Frozen Yogurt-Sorbet & Ice Cream Maker

model ICE-30

\$79 at Cuisinshop.com

2-quart capacity

This larger-capacity electric machine performs consistently, yielding smooth, light-bodied ice cream in 25 minutes without tasting whipped. As with all the units we tested, the ice cream was soft-textured right out of the machine but firmed up after several hours in the freezer. We like the large hole in the top, which makes it easy to add ingredients and monitor the progress of the ice cream (you can also safely dip in a spoon). Its capacity is another plus. Our one complaint is the noise: This machine is loud.

Manual control, firmer texture

Donvier Ice Cream Maker

\$44.95 at Makeicecream.com

1-quart capacity

This manual ice cream maker requires you to turn the paddle every few minutes. One benefit is that you don't beat in as much air, so you get a denser ice cream and more full-bodied sorbet, both of which are firm enough to be served directly from the canister. The intermittent stirring means the mixture ices up where it sits in contact with the canister's sides, which can lead to a somewhat uneven consistency. An overnight freeze helps. The lid has no hole to pour in your mixture or add ingredients. ♦



Pinot Gris:

BY TIM GAISER

Easy to sip, easy to pair with food

What's The Next Big Thing in white wine? Many say it's Pinot Gris. That's because Pinot Gris, or Pinot Grigio, as it's known in Italy, is easy to say (*PEE-noh GREE*, or *GREE-zhee-oh*), even easier to sip, and one of the most versatile whites of all when it comes to food pairing. Pinot Gris ranges from light, crisp apéritifs to rich, lush Chardonnay-like wines to succulent, honeyed dessert wines, with every step in between.

Though Pinot Gris thrives in a wide range of climates—from warm and sunny to cool and alpine—the

very best and richest examples come from the Alsace region of eastern France. These wines are full bodied, with wonderfully seductive apple-pear and melon flavors mixed with exotic spice notes.

The cooler northern Italian regions of Friuli and Trentino-Alto Adige create Pinot Grigios in a lighter, crisper style with tart citrus fruit and steely, mineral characteristics. Though many are lighter-style quaffers, serious Pinot Grigios are produced in smaller quantities by the better estates.

In the New World, Pinot Gris can be found in Oregon's Willamette Valley, where it's often medium bodied and resembles Alsace wines in style with honeyed, spicy fruit and tart acidity. And though a relative newcomer to Pinot Gris, the south island of New Zealand is turning out delicious examples that combine the succulent fruit of Alsace with the zesty acidity of northern Italy.

Tim Gaiser, a master sommelier and contributing editor to Fine Cooking, drinks Pinot Gris in San Francisco. ♦

with food

Pinot Gris/Grigio is quite versatile when it comes to food pairing.

worth seeking out

As Pinot Grigio becomes trendier, many bottles are of average quality and some ludicrously overpriced. But here are ten well worth drinking.

typical flavors

apple

pear

citrus

melon

spice

mineral

honey

Lighter Pinot Gris are wonderful apéritif wines and perfect with fresh shellfish and lighter fish preparations.

Medium-bodied Pinot Gris are delicious sipped solo or enjoyed with seared or grilled fish and simple oven-roasted chicken.

Full-bodied complex Pinot Gris can be paired with meaty fish, cream sauces, rich veal, chicken, or pork dishes, foie gras, and even lamb.

- ❖ **2003 Zenato Pinot Grigio**
Veneto, Italy \$10
- ❖ **2004 Matua Valley Pinot Gris**
New Zealand \$12
- ❖ **2003 "Sortesele" Pinot Grigio**
Santi, Italy \$13

- ❖ **2003 Alois Lageder Pinot Grigio**
Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy \$18
- ❖ **2003 Gallo of Sonoma Pinot Grigio**
California \$13
- ❖ **2003 King Estate Pinot Gris**
Oregon \$14
- ❖ **2003 Willakenzie Estate Pinot Gris**
Oregon \$18
- ❖ **2002 Albert Boxler Pinot Gris**
Alsace \$25

- ❖ **2003 Vie di Romans Pinot Grigio "Dessimis"**
Isonzo, Italy \$32
- ❖ **2003 Domaine Weinbach Pinot Gris**
"Cuvée St. Catherine"
Alsace \$45

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The Taunton Press

Get your goat

Goat's milk doesn't just make outstanding cheese—it also takes ice cream and butter to a new level

BY REBECCA FREEDMAN

Goat cheeses to savor

Artisan goat cheeses come in a range of styles, like the California cheeses at left. They work beautifully on a cheese plate, along with a few sweet touches: Try a drizzle of lavender honey, a scattering of dried cherries or fresh figs, or a small slice of quince paste.

Redwood Hill Farm's Crottin **1** is a rich, fresh goat cheese with a clean flavor, while its Camellia **2** is a Camembert-style ripened cheese that's wonderfully creamy and slightly on the salty side. Redwood Hill Crottin (six 3-ounce cheeses for \$17) and Camellia (six 4-ounce cheeses for \$22), at Redwoodhill.com (707-823-8250).

Capricious **3**, from Achadinha Goat Cheese Company, is a semi-hard aged cheese with deep, nutty flavor and a surprisingly creamy texture for a hard goat cheese. It works beautifully as a grating cheese—try sprinkling it over your favorite pasta dish. Capricious aged goat cheese, \$25 per pound. To order, call 707-763-1025. For more information, visit Achadinha.com.

Cypress Grove Chèvre's goat's milk Cheddar **4** is much milder than other Cheddars we've sampled. We also love Cypress Grove's Mount McKinley aged goat cheese **5**, with its round, milky sweetness and impressively lasting creaminess. Cypress Grove Goat Cheddar, \$15.50 per pound, and Mount McKinley, \$17.25 per pound, at Cypressgrovechevre.com.



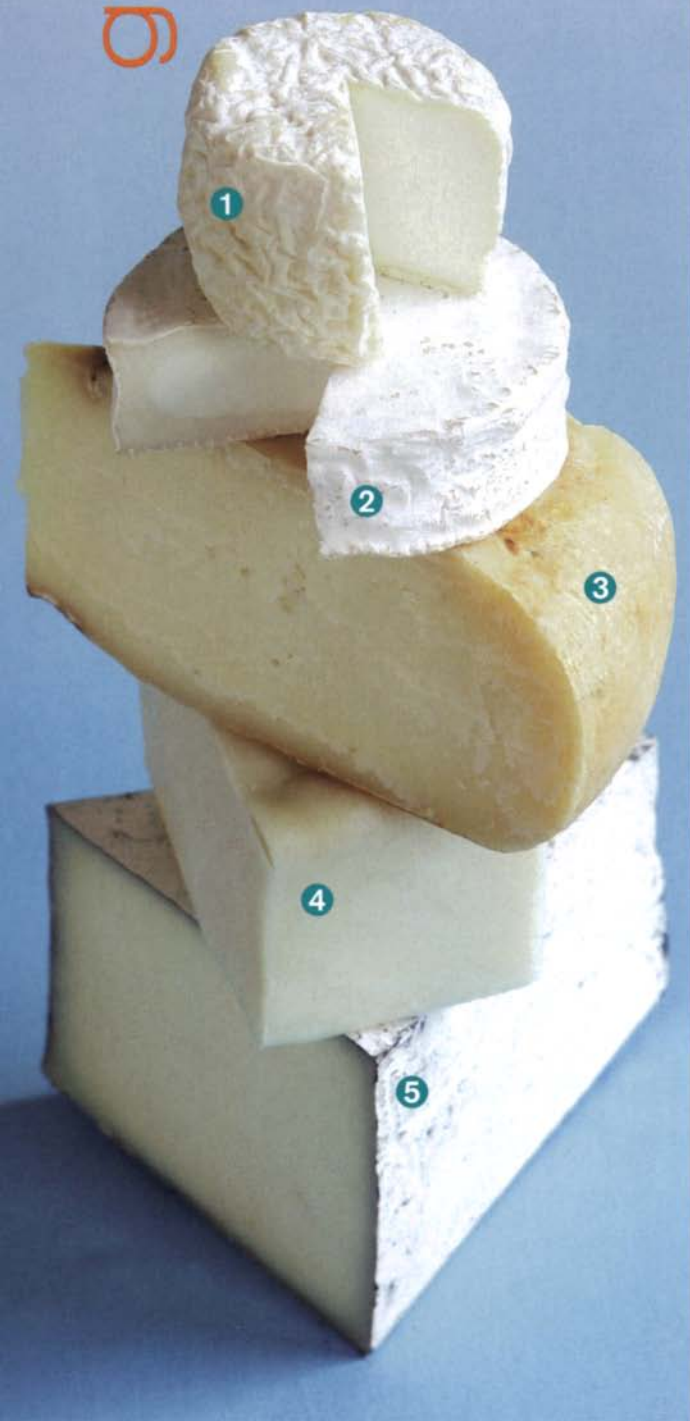
A butter standout

During a recent taste test of goat's milk butters, one brand stood head and shoulders above the rest. Meyenberg butter is rich, sweet, salty, and delicately goaty all at the same time. Slather it on grilled bread or toss a little on steamed vegetables. *Meyenberg goat milk butter, available at select Whole Foods and Wild Oats stores, or order from Meyenberg at 800-891-4628. \$7 per cube (two cubes minimum).*



Ice cream with a sophisticated tang

In classic vanilla and chocolate as well as more unusual flavors like Chocolate Cabernet and Black Mission Fig, this goat's milk ice cream is intensely flavored but light in texture. Because of its tanginess, we like it best in small tastes, as in a scoop to complement a fruit tart. If you order by mail, note that the ice cream may arrive quite soft—be sure to pop it into the freezer right away. *LaLoo's goat's milk ice cream, \$8 per pint (four pints is the minimum order) at Goatmilkicecream.com.* ♦



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Winning tip

Blind bake without spilling the beans

When parbaking or blind baking a pastry shell, I keep the crust from slipping by anchoring it with dried beans sealed in a heat-resistant nylon oven bag. The bag removes easily, without tearing the delicate crust or spilling the beans, and can be used to store the beans for re-use.

—Mary Hooten, Austin, Texas

A prize for the best tip

We want your best tips—we'll pay for the ones we publish—and we'll give a prize to the cleverest tip in each issue. Write to Tips, *Fine Cooking*, PO Box 5506, Newtown, CT 06470-5506 or email fc@taunton.com.

The prize for this issue's winner: Le Creuset enameled cast-iron 2¼-quart tomato-shaped casserole; value, \$100.



Keep basting brush bristles clean and supple

After washing a basting brush, I place it in a mug half-filled with coarse salt, such as kosher salt. The salt helps to absorb excess moisture and oil and keeps the bristles separate and pliant. Before storing, I tap off any salt crystals that are clinging to the brush.

—“Topfor,” via email

Two-in-one pasta tip

When draining cooked pasta, I place the serving bowl under the colander in the sink. That way the hot water spills into the dish, warming it up. If the sauce needs loosening, I can then scoop out some of the hot, starchy cooking water that's left in the bowl.

—Lillian Julow, Gainesville, Florida

Roasted peppers with less mess

I used to steam roasted red bell peppers in a paper bag, but it tended to create a soggy mess. Now I place the charred peppers in a steamer insert set inside a pot and cover with a lid. As the peppers steam and their skins loosen, the juices conveniently accumulate in the bottom of the pot.

—Darlene Wong, Toronto, Ontario

Extend celery's shelf life

I end up throwing a lot of celery away because it loses its texture and turns slimy too quickly in the refrigerator. I found out that if you wrap it tightly in aluminum foil, it will last at least three times longer, about a month.

—Lisa Ciblar, Brodhead, Wisconsin

Slow-roast summer tomatoes on the grill

It's often too hot in the summer to leave the oven on for hours in order to dry fresh summer tomatoes. So I slow-roast them on a sheet pan in my gas grill (covered), sometimes adding wood chips for some nice smoky flavor.

—Nancy Tyler, Whittier, California

A quicker way to label containers

Next time you're freezing foods in reusable containers, label and date with a dry-erase marker (the kind used on erasable boards). I find it's easier and cleaner than labels—I just wipe it off with a damp sponge.

—Maria Giampietro, Clifton, New Jersey



Season chicken safely

Before working with raw chicken, I scoop kosher salt from my pinch bowl (a small ramekin) into a smaller bowl and add freshly ground pepper into the bowl as well. That way, my seasonings are in place, and I don't have to worry about cross-contaminating my bowl of salt or getting chicken goo on my pepper mill.

—Sarah Jameson, San Antonio, Texas



Brush graters clean

In my utensil drawer, I keep a clean, new toothbrush for brushing off cheese, chocolate, zest or whatever else might cling to the underside of my rasp-style or other grater.

—Carole Resnick, Cleveland, Ohio



Keep stock ingredients submerged

Whenever I'm making stock, I spread a collapsible stainless-steel steamer insert below the surface of the water, spreading it open until it fits snug against the pot's sides. The holes in the steamer let the stock bubble up while the chicken parts, vegetables, bay leaves, and other aromatics stay submerged, making it much easier to skim the scum off the top of the broth as it comes to a boil.

—Debbie Allen, Elmhurst, Illinois

two ways to organize dry goods

Save package labels

To keep track of exactly what's in my flour and other dry goods canisters, I cut out the product label, date it, and set it directly in or tape it to the outside of the container. This way I never get confused about whether I've grabbed the cake flour or all-purpose flour, or whether I'm using instant cornmeal or stone ground.

—Danielle Haverford, Saugerties, New York

Keep grain cooking instructions handy

To avoid having to look up the liquid ratios and cooking information for couscous, oatmeal, and other grains that I typically buy in bulk and store in large Mason jars on open shelves, I keep the basic instructions on a Post-It note adhered to the underside of the lid for easy reference.

—May Fallon, Springfield, Massachusetts



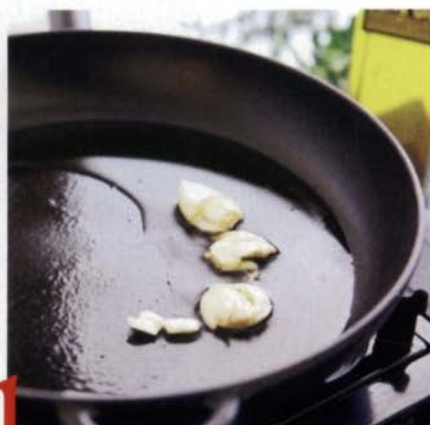
fresh Tomato Sauces fast

The secrets to these quick, flavorful sauces are cherry tomatoes and a shallow pan

BY DOMENICA MARCHETTI



A wide, shallow pan is essential to creating a fast summer sauce. "I use a 10- or 11-inch skillet whose wide surface area and lack of depth allows the tomatoes to cook down quickly," says Domenica Marchetti.



Start by heating garlic and extra-virgin olive oil over gentle heat. You're not looking to brown or fry the garlic, but rather to let it soften slowly so that the oil is infused with its flavor.



Next, turn up the heat a notch and add a couple of flavor boosters—salty, spicy, or cured ingredients such as anchovies, hot chiles, or pancetta. Here's where you can also add garden ingredients like diced eggplant, bell peppers, and summer squash, which give body to the sauce.



After a brief sauté, add the tomatoes, along with salt and pepper and any woody or dried herbs, such as rosemary or oregano. Turn up the heat again to bring the sauce to a lively simmer and let it cook for 15 to 20 minutes—just until the sauce is thick and pulpy.



4

For the final touch, remove the saucepan from the heat and stir in delicate fresh herbs, if you like. Serve right away over pasta, or as a topping for everything from chicken to pizza to salmon.

As soon as the weather gets warm and the first crop of local cherry tomatoes arrives at my farmers' market, I put away my deep-sided saucepot—the one that I use for slowly simmered ragùs and thick marinaras—and pull out a shallow sauté pan. This pan, I've discovered, is the key to creating fresh and zesty summer sauces

These sauces are for more than just pasta: they can be napped over grilled sausages, fish fillets, pork chops, or chicken, or use one as a topping for homemade pizza.

in a matter of minutes. No endless simmering is needed: just 20 minutes or so, until the tomatoes have collapsed into a thick and flavorful sauce.

While meaty red Romas are always a good choice for long-cooking sauces, cherry tomatoes are best for these fast-cooking summer sauces. In fact, these tomatoes are the tastiest and most convenient. Their zingy acidity translates into full flavor, and their thin skins mean you don't need to blanch and peel them, as you'd do for a more involved tomato sauce. In fact, I like the way the skins add to the visual and textural appeal of the finished dish. Smaller, sweeter grape tomatoes can work, too, but they're really better for salads—grape tomatoes aren't as juicy, so the sauce will likely be thicker, more pulpy, and less tangy.

Domenica Marchetti lives in Alexandria, Virginia. Her first cookbook, Four Seasons of Italian Soups & Stews, is due out from Chronicle Books in Fall 2006.



Fresh Tomato & Basil Sauce

Serves four to five.

SUGGESTED PASTA: 1 pound dried farfalle

BEYOND PASTA: Spoon over grilled shrimp, scallops, or whitefish; spread on thick slices of grilled bread.

CHEESE OPTION: 5 ounces ricotta salata, cut into a ¼ inch dice (to yield about 1 cup)

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
3 large cloves garlic, sliced as thinly as possible
2 pounds cherry tomatoes, rinsed and halved
1 teaspoon kosher salt; more to taste
Freshly ground black pepper
1 cup loosely packed fresh basil leaves (from about one small bunch), very thinly sliced

In a 10- or 11-inch sauté pan, heat the oil and garlic over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until the garlic is softened but not browned, about 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes, salt, and pepper to taste. Toss gently to coat and then raise the heat to medium. Simmer, stirring occasionally and adjusting the heat to maintain a lively but not too vigorous simmer, until the tomatoes have been reduced to a thick, pulpy sauce, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from the heat. Sprinkle on the basil and stir to combine thoroughly.

To serve with pasta, see the box at far right.



Fresh Tomato Sauce with Herbs & Olives

Serves four to five.

SUGGESTED PASTA: 1 pound dried fusilli, gemelli, or other short, sturdy pasta

BEYOND PASTA: Serve over grilled chicken breasts, salmon, or tuna steaks. Toss with hot chunks of boiled potatoes for a potato-tomato salad.

CHEESE OPTION: Freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano or Pecorino Romano

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
3 large cloves garlic, peeled and lightly smashed
3 tablespoons chopped mixed fresh herbs (I use equal parts oregano, rosemary, and thyme)
1 cup coarsely chopped pitted Gaeta or Kalamata olives
1½ pounds cherry tomatoes, rinsed and halved
½ teaspoon kosher salt; more to taste
Freshly ground black pepper

In a 10- or 11-inch sauté pan, heat the oil and garlic over medium-low to medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the garlic infuses the oil but doesn't brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Using a fork, fish out and discard the garlic. Sprinkle in the herbs and olives and raise the heat to medium. Stir to combine and sauté for about a minute. Add the tomatoes, salt, and pepper to taste. Simmer, stirring occasionally and adjusting the heat to maintain a lively but not too vigorous simmer, until the tomatoes have been reduced to a thick, pulpy sauce, 15 to 20 minutes.

To serve with pasta, see the box at far right.



Summer Amatriciana Sauce

Serves four to five.

SUGGESTED PASTA: 1 pound dried bucatini or perciatelli

BEYOND PASTA: Serve over seared pork chops or polenta, or as a topping for pizza.

CHEESE OPTION: Freshly grated Pecorino Romano

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium red onion, cut into ¼-inch dice (to yield about 2 cups)
- 2 ¼-inch-thick slices pancetta, cut into short strips (¼ inch wide and ½ inch long)
- 1½ pounds cherry tomatoes, rinsed and halved
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt; more to taste

In a 10- or 11-inch sauté pan, heat the oil and onion over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the onion is softened but not browned, 4 to 5 minutes. Add the pancetta and cook, stirring, until the pancetta has begun to render its fat and the onion and pancetta are roughly the same muted shade of purple, 5 to 6 minutes. Add the tomatoes, cayenne, and salt. Simmer, stirring occasionally and adjusting the heat to maintain a lively but not too vigorous simmer, until the tomatoes have been reduced to a thick, pulpy sauce, 15 to 20 minutes.

To serve with pasta, see the box at right.



Tomato Sauce alla Siciliana

Serves four to five.

SUGGESTED PASTA: 1 pound dried cavatappi or other short, sturdy pasta

BEYOND PASTA: Serve over grilled lamb chops or sausages. Mix with grilled or roasted peppers, summer squash, or onions to make a ratatouille-style side dish.

CHEESE OPTION: Freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano

- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ cup chopped yellow onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ pound baby eggplant (1 to 2 eggplant), cut into ½-inch cubes (to yield about 2 cups)
- 1½ pounds cherry tomatoes, rinsed and halved
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt; more to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon aged balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint leaves

In a 10- or 11-inch sauté pan, heat the oil, onion, and garlic over medium heat, stirring frequently, until the onion is softened but not browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in the cubed eggplant and cook, stirring frequently, until the eggplant softens and begins to brown, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the tomatoes, salt, and pepper to taste. Simmer, stirring occasionally and adjusting the heat to maintain a lively but not too vigorous simmer, until the tomatoes have been reduced to a thick, pulpy sauce, 15 to 20 minutes. Sprinkle the balsamic vinegar over the sauce, stir, and simmer for another 5 minutes. Stir in the mint and more salt and pepper to taste.

To serve with pasta, see the box at right. ♦

To serve with pasta

While the sauce is cooking, bring a large pot of abundantly salted water to a vigorous boil and cook the pasta until al dente. Drain it well. Taste the sauce and adjust the seasonings if needed. Toss the pasta with three-quarters of the sauce and divide among individual serving bowls. Spoon a little of the remaining sauce over each serving and sprinkle on the cheese, if you like.

A Leisurely Summer Picnic



An Oregon chef's picnic menu celebrates the bold flavors and easy elegance of the Mediterranean

BY STU STEIN

Picnics always bring me back to the time when I worked in southern France, where people feast in the open air whenever they have the chance. So for this menu I decided to celebrate everything I love about the Mediterranean: The wise cooks, who instinctively rely on what's in season at the local market. The straightforward cooking techniques. And, above all, the irresistible flavors—sweet, ripe tomatoes; tangy lemons, capers, and artichokes; and Moroccan spices, which are extremely popular in the South of France.

In keeping with the laid-back spirit of picnicking, sandwiches are the heart of this menu. My olive-oil-poached tuna salad sandwiches and the mini Moroccan-spiced chicken breast sandwiches are hearty, easy to make, and even easier to eat.

Sandwiches that taste great and travel well begin with a base of nice chewy bread, like focaccia or ciabatta. I cut the bread into fairly thick slices and lightly toast them, which prevents the filling from making the bread soggy. I use substantial flavorful spreads or jams instead of thin, drippy sauces. I don't pile on the fillings because smallish sandwiches are much easier to eat. And I keep the components of the sandwiches separate from one another until just before I leave—or I assemble the sandwiches on the spot at the picnic site.

A trio of cool accompaniments rounds out the meal. My yellow tomato gazpacho is bright and cool, and it travels easily in a thermos. The spicy-sweet couscous salad goes well with both sandwiches. And, as for the watermelon, well, in the dog days of summer, there's not a better dessert in the world.

All the recipes in this menu can be prepared in advance, assembled quickly, transported easily, and served chilled or at room temperature. The only utensils you'll need are a spoon and your fingers.

Picnic success is a simple matter of careful planning and packing. Here's a checklist:

- A picnic basket (a wicker container, canvas tote, or even a plain brown paper bag will do) for carrying dishes and utensils.
- A cooler and ice packs for all the food.
- A knife, sturdy dinnerware, and serving utensils.
- A thermos to keep the gazpacho cold.
- A blanket, quilt, or tablecloth.
- Napkins and a few dishtowels.
- Wine (see p. 40) and a corkscrew.
- Bottled water.
- Citronella candles to ward off flying intruders.
- Salt and pepper mills.
- A garbage bag.

Sandwich strategies:

If you want to assemble your sandwiches at the picnic site, pack the cold tuna and the grilled chicken in a cooler along with the other sandwich fixings. Or, you can put the sandwiches together right before you depart, wrap them tightly in plastic, and pack in a cooler for transport.

menu

Yellow Tomato
Gazpacho with
Avocado Salsa

Lemony Artichoke
& Caper Tuna Salad
Sandwiches

Moroccan Grilled
Chicken Sandwiches
with Onion Marmalade

Spicy & Citrusy
Couscous Salad

Watermelon

A word about warm-weather alfresco dining:

Many of the foods we enjoy eating at picnics can become dangerous if left unrefrigerated for long periods of time, so make sure you store all perishable foods—such as meat, dairy, eggs, or mayonnaise—in a cooler with plenty of ice.

Timeline

Two days ahead:

Make the Moroccan dry rub.

Make the onion marmalade.

The night before:

Make the couscous salad, reserving the scallions, almonds, currants, and parsley.

Prep the gazpacho ingredients.

Earlier that day:

Purée the gazpacho and refrigerate.

Poach the tuna.

Make the lemon vinaigrette and marinate the artichokes.

Grill the chicken.

An hour before:

Make the avocado salsa.

Right before you leave:

Assemble the sandwiches.

Pack the picnic basket.

At the picnic:

Taste the soup and adjust the seasonings.

Add the scallions, almonds, currants, and parsley to the couscous.

Slice the watermelon.

Drink choices

Picnics call for versatile wines that can be enjoyed with everything in the basket. The traits you're looking for are youthful, vibrant fruit and tart acidity, and a number of different wines will work.

A dry, crisp rosé is a natural; try the 2003 Falesco Vitiano Rosé (\$12) from Italy or the 2003 Bonny Doon Vin Gris de Cigare (\$12) from California.

A lightly chilled, fruity red would also be delicious with the soup and sandwiches. Beaujolais is the quintessential picnic wine and the 2003 Domaine Louis Tête Beaujolais Villages (\$12) is a good value. Pinot Noir would work, too: try the 2003 Erath (\$14) or the 2003 McKinlay (\$16), both from Oregon.

—*Tim Gaiser, a master sommelier and a contributing editor to Fine Cooking*

Avocado Salsa

Yields about 3 cups.

2 small Haas avocados, cut into small dice
1 small hot red chile, seeded and minced
1 small red onion, cut into small dice
1 red heirloom slicing tomato, seeded and diced
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh cilantro
Juice of 1 lime
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
Kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper

In a medium bowl, stir together the avocado, chile, onion, tomato, cilantro, lime juice, olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate, covered, for at least 20 minutes and up to 3 hours before serving.

Yellow Tomato Gazpacho with Avocado Salsa

Yields about 10 cups.

I love Yellow Taxi tomatoes, but if you can't find them, substitute any truly ripe, in-season tomato. This recipe makes a jumbo batch of gazpacho. Take some to the picnic in a thermos or other leakproof container and save the rest for another day.

FOR THE SOUP:

5 pounds Yellow Taxi tomatoes or other ripe yellow or red heirloom tomatoes, cored and cut into chunks

3 cloves garlic

1 English or regular cucumber (about ¾ pound), peeled, seeded if necessary, and cut into large pieces

1 medium yellow bell pepper, seeded and cut into large pieces
1 small red onion, cut into large pieces

½ small hot red chile (or to taste), seeded and cut into large pieces

½ cup red-wine vinegar

¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Kosher salt and ground white pepper

FOR THE GARNISH:

Avocado Salsa (at left)

6 each red and yellow cherry tomatoes, cut in half

Make the soup: Working in batches, purée the tomatoes, garlic, cucumber, yellow pepper, onion, chile, vinegar, and olive oil in a blender until smooth. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve into a bowl. Press on the solids with a wooden spoon in order to extract as much liquid as possible; discard the solids. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Refrigerate in an airtight container for at least 2 hours or up to two days.

To serve: Taste the soup and adjust the seasonings. Spoon 2 generous tablespoons of the avocado salsa in the center of each soup bowl. Pour or ladle the gazpacho over the salsa and garnish with the cherry tomato halves.





Lemony Artichoke & Caper Tuna Salad Sandwiches

Yields six sandwiches.

- 1 pound fresh tuna filet (I prefer albacore)**
- 2½ cups extra-virgin olive oil; more if needed to cover the fish during cooking**
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 14-ounce can water-packed artichoke hearts, drained, rinsed, and coarsely chopped**
- 2 tablespoons drained nonpareil capers, rinsed**
- 12 slices sourdough bread, lightly toasted**
- 1 ripe heirloom slicing tomato, cut into 6 slices**
- 6 leaves lettuce (such as romaine, red leaf, or Boston), washed and dried**

Cut the tuna into even 3- to 4-inch pieces. In a deep saucepan, wide enough to hold a few tuna pieces without crowding and deep enough to contain the poaching oil without spilling when the tuna is submerged, heat the olive oil over medium heat until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the oil reaches 190°F. The oil should stay at or near this temperature during the cooking process, so you'll need to monitor and adjust the intensity of the heat under the pan.

Rub the tuna with 1 tablespoon of the lemon juice and season with salt and pepper. Carefully submerge as many pieces of the tuna as will fit in a single layer in the hot oil. The oil must cover the tuna, so add more oil if needed. Cook until the tuna turns pinkish gray on the outside and is slightly pink in the center (remove a piece of tuna with a slotted spatula or spoon and cut

into it to check), 3 to 6 minutes. Remove the tuna from the oil and set on a platter to cool. Repeat the process as necessary to cook the remaining tuna. Don't discard the poaching oil yet.

When the tuna is cool enough to handle, break it into small chunks over a medium bowl. Add the artichokes, capers, ¼ cup of the poaching oil, and the remaining 3 tablespoons lemon juice. (Discard the remaining poaching oil.) Season with 1 teaspoon salt and several grinds of pepper or to taste. Toss gently and let the tuna salad sit for 10 minutes at room temperature or overnight in the refrigerator. Before serving, bring to room temperature and check the seasonings.

Right before you leave for the picnic, or when you reach your picnic destination, layer a lettuce leaf, a tomato slice, and about a sixth of the tuna salad between two slices of toast (or use less if a sixth of the salad seems like too much for the size of your bread slices). Repeat to make six sandwiches. Wrap well in plastic for transport or serve immediately.

Tip: To quickly toast several slices of bread at once, use your broiler. Set the rack as close to the element as possible, arrange the bread in a single layer on a heavy-duty baking sheet, and toast both sides under the broiler. Watch carefully to avoid burning.

Moroccan Spice Rub

Yields about 1/4 cup.

If there's a commercially prepared North African-inspired spice rub that you like, feel free to use it instead of this version. I won't be offended.

2 tablespoons sweet paprika
(preferably Hungarian)
1 teaspoon granulated sugar
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
1/4 teaspoon cayenne

In a small bowl, stir together all the ingredients. Cover the bowl. Stored in an airtight container, the spice rub will keep at room temperature for up to six months.

Onion Marmalade

Yields about 2 1/2 cups.

3 medium yellow onions (about 1 1/2 pounds), sliced into thin half-moons
1 cup sherry vinegar or white-wine vinegar
1/2 cup dry white wine
1/4 cup granulated sugar
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh thyme
Kosher salt and ground white pepper

In a 4-quart or larger nonreactive saucepan, combine the onions, vinegar, wine, 1/2 cup water, sugar, and thyme. Bring to a boil over high heat; reduce the heat to medium low and simmer slowly, stirring occasionally, until the onions are very soft and the liquid has cooked down to a syrupy consistency, 45 minutes to 1 1/4 hours. The onions should be fairly moist but not swimming in syrup. Taste and season with salt and pepper and adjust the sugar and acid level as necessary to get a sweet-and-sour flavor. Let cool, transfer to an airtight container, and refrigerate for up to two weeks.

Moroccan Grilled Chicken Sandwiches with Onion Marmalade

Yields twelve small sandwiches.

Moroccan Spice Rub (at left)
4 medium boneless, skinless chicken breast halves (7 to 8 ounces each), lightly pounded to an even thickness
Vegetable oil as needed
12 2 1/2-inch-square pieces focaccia, sliced in half horizontally and lightly toasted
1 to 2 cups baby arugula, washed and dried
Onion Marmalade (at left)
Kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper

Grill the chicken: Heat a gas grill to medium high or prepare a medium-hot charcoal fire. Oil the grill grate. Spread the spice rub on a plate. Lightly rub each chicken breast with oil and press each breast into the spice rub to thoroughly coat one side of the meat.

When the grill is hot, arrange the chicken, spice-rub side down, at a 45-degree angle to the bars of the cooking grate. Grill until the chicken has grill marks, about 2 minutes. Rotate the breasts 90 degrees and continue grilling for 2 minutes. Flip the chicken and cook the second side the same way for another 4 to 6 minutes, until the chicken has crosshatched grill marks and the meat is cooked through. Transfer the breasts to a platter, let cool until barely warm, cover loosely, and refrigerate until you're ready to pack your cooler or assemble the sandwiches.

Build the sandwiches: Right before you leave for the picnic, or when you reach your destination, slice each breast thinly crosswise, holding the knife at a 45-degree angle. Cover the bottom pieces of focaccia with a layer of arugula (to keep the bread from getting soggy). Top with about a tablespoon of onion marmalade, some sliced chicken breast, a sprinkle of salt, more onion marmalade, and another layer of arugula. Cover with the top pieces of toasted focaccia. Wrap each sandwich tightly in plastic wrap for transport or serve immediately.





Spicy & Citrusy Couscous Salad

Serves six as a side dish; yields about 5 cups.

When I make this for picnics, I prepare it the night before, refrigerate it, and serve it cool the next day.

2 cups vegetable broth, low-salt chicken broth, or water

1½ teaspoons sweet paprika

1 pinch saffron threads (optional)

¾ teaspoon harissa (see From Our Test Kitchen, p. 69) or 2 to 3 dashes of hot sauce, such as Tabasco

Kosher salt and ground white pepper

¼ cup plus 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 small yellow onion, cut into small dice

1 small red bell pepper, seeded and cut into small dice

1 cup couscous

½ teaspoon finely grated orange zest

¼ cup fresh orange juice

½ cup thinly sliced scallions

½ cup sliced almonds, lightly toasted

¼ cup dried currants

¼ cup coarsely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

In a medium saucepan, bring the broth or water, paprika, saffron (if using), harissa or hot sauce, ½ teaspoon salt, and a pinch of white pepper to a boil over medium heat. Cover and reduce the heat to low to keep the broth at a simmer. Taste and adjust the seasonings. Meanwhile, heat ¼ cup of the olive oil in a large

sauté pan over medium heat. When the oil is hot, add the onion and red pepper and cook until the vegetables are soft but not browned, 8 to 10 minutes. Add the couscous and stir to coat the grains with oil. Remove the pan from heat. Add the simmering liquid to the couscous and stir to evenly distribute the liquid. Cover the pan and let it sit until all the liquid is absorbed and the couscous is tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Remove the lid and fluff the couscous with a fork. Set aside to cool for 15 minutes.

Whisk the remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil with the orange zest, orange juice, and ½ teaspoon salt. Toss with the couscous. Let cool completely and then transfer to an airtight container or a bowl covered with plastic wrap and refrigerate. Put the scallions, almonds, dried currants, and parsley in a separate container and refrigerate.

Just before heading to the picnic, stir the scallions, almonds, currants, and parsley into the couscous. Taste and adjust the seasonings as needed.

Formerly the executive chef of the Peerless Restaurant in Ashland, Oregon, Stu Stein is now the culinary director and executive chef for King Estate Winery in Eugene, Oregon. He's the author of The Sustainable Kitchen. ♦

Watermelon: the perfect picnic dessert



There's no such thing as an ordinary watermelon: There are more than 50 varieties, sporting solid or striped green rinds and red, white, yellow, or pink flesh. They can be round, oval, oblong—even square. They can have seeds, or not.

I'm fond of varieties with sweet yellow flesh, and I also love the little 6- to 8-pound specimens called Mickey Lee or Minnie Lee watermelons, which seem more flavorful than their full-size counterparts. —S. S.

2 Chefs, 2 Ways

Grilling a Whole Chicken

If you like the succulent meat and evenly browned skin on good rotisserie chicken, you'll be a big fan of whole chicken cooked on the grill. Grilling gives results similar to a rotisserie, with the bonus of smoky flavors rising up from the grill. It might seem daunting to grill a whole chicken, but it's actually easier than grilling chicken parts. You don't need to monitor several pieces at once, and there's less chance of overcooking the breast meat.

If you need more reasons to give it a try, here are two: Joanne Weir's and Waldy Malouf's recipes. We asked these two grilling experts to put their minds to the subject of grilling a whole chicken, and they each came back with a method and flavor direction that was smart, different, and truly scrumptious.

The main trick with both recipes is to get the grill temperature right so the chickens cook at a steady pace. This takes more patience than skill. Give the coals time to burn down or the gas grill time to heat up, and use an oven thermometer as recommended in the recipes.

—Sarah Jay, managing editor

Butterflied



Grilled Chicken with Rosemary & Caramelized Lemons

Serves four.

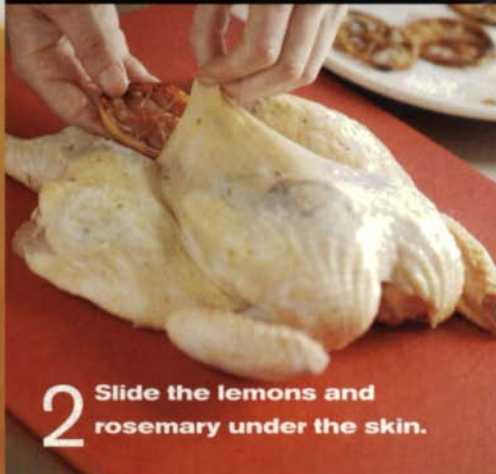
½ cup kosher salt; more as needed
1 3½- to 4-pound whole chicken
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium lemon, sliced ⅛ inch thick, seeded
2 teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary
Freshly ground black pepper

A day ahead: In a large bowl, dissolve the salt in 8 cups cold water. Add the chicken and submerge it in the brine, using a plate to weight it, if needed. Refrigerate for 24 hours.

On the day of grilling: Set up a charcoal or gas grill to cook with direct heat.



1 Cook the lemon slices until soft and golden.



2 Slide the lemons and rosemary under the skin.



3 Grill over direct heat, watching for hot spots.

“Caramelizing the lemon slices in a skillet sweetens their flavor and gives them a head start on cooking. When the chicken comes off the grill, the lemon slices taste almost preserved. They’re sweet and tender enough to eat straight.”

—Joanne Weir



Joanne Weir is a cooking teacher, cookbook author, and the star of the PBS cooking show, *Weir Cooking in the City*.

For gas grills, turn all the burners to low (an oven thermometer set on the grate should read 450°F to 500°F; you’ll be able to hold your hand 4 or 5 inches above the grate for 5 seconds).

For charcoal, light a chimney starter filled with mesquite lump charcoal (for sources, see p. 82). When all the coals are lit, pour them in the center of the grill and spread in an even layer. Let them burn down to medium-low heat (you’ll be able to hold your hand 1 to 2 inches above the grate for 5 full seconds).

Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium heat. **1** Add the lemon slices. Cook, turning occasionally, until they’re soft and golden brown (it’s fine if the pulp starts to dissolve), 5 to 10 minutes.

Transfer the slices to a plate and let cool.

Meanwhile, take the chicken out of the brine; pat it dry with paper towels. Cut off the wingtips at the first joint. Remove the back-bone by cutting down each side of it; discard it or save it for stock. Lay the chicken flat on a work surface, skin side up, and press on the breastbone to flatten the chicken; you’ll feel some of the rib bones breaking.

Use your fingers to separate the skin from the breast, thighs, and drumsticks, being careful not to tear the skin. Spread the rosemary under the skin, distributing it evenly over the breasts, thighs, and drumsticks. Working with one slice at a time, **2** slide the lemon slices under the skin of the chicken, keeping them in a single layer. Sprinkle the

skin with salt and pepper. Drizzle the remaining 1 tablespoon oil on the chicken and rub the skin so it’s completely coated.

Oil the grill grate. Set the chicken on the grill, skin side down. If using gas, cover the grill; if using charcoal, don’t. Grill the chicken until the skin is deeply golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Monitor the grill for hot spots and move the chicken as needed. **3** Flip the chicken, cover the grill (keep the vents open for charcoal), and grill until an instant-read thermometer registers 175°F in the thickest part of the thigh (the breast should be at least 165°F) and the juices run clear when the thermometer is removed, another 15 to 35 minutes. Remove from the grill and let rest for 10 minutes before carving and serving.



1 Pour out half the beer; pour in a spicy-sweet sauce.



2 Set the chicken over the can so it grills vertically.



3 Reduce the spicy beer mixture to an intense sauce.



On a beer can

Spicy Beer-Can Chicken on the Grill

Serves four to six; yields 1 cup sauce.

Spice Rub (see the recipe at far right)

1 4-pound whole chicken

Beer-Can Sauce (see the recipe at far right)

1 12-ounce can of beer (I like Heineken)

Several large leaves romaine lettuce

½ cup thinly sliced scallions (white and green parts)

1 lemon, zested into very thin strips

1 orange, zested into very thin strips

A day ahead: Make the spice rub; set aside 1 tablespoon for the sauce. Rinse the chicken and pat it dry with paper towels. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon of the spice rub inside

the body and neck cavities. With your fingers, work a little of the spice rub under the skin. Sprinkle the remaining spice rub all over the skin and rub it in to spread evenly. Tuck the wings behind the neck. Cover the chicken and refrigerate overnight.

On the day of grilling: Make the beer-can sauce.

Set up a charcoal or gas grill to cook with indirect heat. If using charcoal, pour about 1 to 2 inches of natural hardwood charcoal over the bottom grate (about a single layer). Light a chimney starter full of coals and when they're covered with ash, pour them over the unlit coals in the grill. When the fire has burned down and the coals are glowing



Spice Rub

Yields ¼ cup.

- 1 tablespoon kosher or sea salt
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon crushed red chile flakes
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

In a small bowl, combine all the ingredients. Mix until well blended. Reserve 1 tablespoon for the Beer-Can Sauce.

Beer-Can Sauce

Yields ¾ cup.

- 6 tablespoons tomato ketchup
- 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1½ tablespoons molasses
- 1½ tablespoons red-wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Spice Rub (see the recipe above)
- ½ teaspoon Tabasco sauce

In a small bowl, whisk all the ingredients until they're well blended.

embers covered with ash, use long tongs or a grill rake to divide the coals into two equal piles on opposite sides of the grill.

If using gas, set the outside burners to medium high and leave the center burner off. (For a two-burner grill, light only one burner.)

While the grill is heating, open the can of beer and poke several holes on top of the can using a churchkey-style can opener. Pour out (or drink) half of the beer. **1** Using a funnel, fill the can with the beer-can sauce. Gently swirl the can to mix. Put the can in the center of a 10- to 12-inch ovenproof skillet. Holding the chicken upright with the opening of the body cavity facing down, lower the chicken onto the beer can. **2** Stabilize the chicken with its legs so that it stands up.

Grill the chicken: Set the skillet in the center of the grill, or in the area where there's no direct heat. Put an oven thermometer on the grate next to it. Cover the grill. Adjust the vents or burners to keep the temperature between 350° and 375°F, and grill the chicken until an instant-read thermometer registers 175°F at the thickest part of the thigh, 45 minutes to 1¼ hours. If the grill temperature is correct, the chicken should start to lightly brown after 15 minutes. (If using charcoal, check every 15 minutes and if the temperature drops below 300°F or if the coals have burned down very far, add a handful of fresh charcoal to each pile of coals.)

Carefully transfer the chicken and beer can to a cutting board. Let it rest for 5 min-

utes. Meanwhile, line a platter with the lettuce leaves. Using wads of paper towels to protect your hands, carefully remove the chicken from the beer can (ask for help if the can is stuck). **3** Discard all but 1 tablespoon of fat in the skillet and then pour the contents of the can into the skillet. (If the skillet drippings have burned, pour the contents of the can into a clean saucepan.) Bring to a boil over medium-high heat and cook, whisking, until it has reduced slightly and thickened to a nice gravy consistency, 2 to 3 minutes. Carve the chicken into eight pieces and arrange on the platter. Garnish the chicken with the chopped scallions and citrus zest. Put the sauce in a sauceboat or bowl and serve alongside. ♦

"To put a spin on the usual beer-can chicken recipe, I added a sweet-spicy sauce to the beer, coated the chicken with an aromatic spice rub, and simmered the beer mixture after grilling to make a rich sauce with a kick. I surprised even myself with how good it is."

—Waldy Malouf



Waldy Malouf is the chef and a co-owner of Beacon restaurant in New York City.

A Burger with a Twist

Spread on a zesty South American sauce and swap the bun for a pita pocket

BY BOB SLOAN

A classic burger is pretty hard to beat, but sometimes you just want more. In which case, the burger here, seasoned with jalapeño, onions, and garlic, served in a pita, and topped with chimichurri sauce (instead of the classic ketchup), is a spirited alternative. Chimichurri—a tangy herb and garlic sauce from Argentina—is often served with grilled meats, and I've discovered that it works wonders on a burger, too.

I cook my burgers in a cast-iron pan, which gives a delicious, nicely seared crust. For the meat, I like ground round with 15% fat content. It gives the burger a juicy flavor, but without leaving behind a moat of fat in the pan to smoke up the kitchen and adjoining rooms. (Of course, you can grill these burgers, and if you do, I recommend using ground chuck with as much as 20% fat.) I also switch to pita bread instead of the usual roll for a change of pace and to help accommodate an ample helping of chimichurri.

While this burger won't come together quite as quickly as a basic one, the few extra touches are well worth the time. Sautéing the onion and garlic before adding them to the meat makes for more integrated flavor, as well as a better consistency in the burger. The chimichurri adds intense flavor, and if there's any left over, it's perfect on grilled vegetables, steak, fish, or chicken. What we have is beyond your basic burger, but it's a keeper, especially for those times when you want something jazzy and new.



Chimichurri Sauce

Yields about 1 cup.

This sauce—my version of the classic Argentine condiment—can be made up to two days in advance and refrigerated in a well-sealed container.

- 1 cup packed flat-leaf parsley leaves (from 1 large bunch)**
- 1 cup packed fresh mint leaves (from 1 large bunch)**
- ⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice (from 1½ limes)**
- 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped garlic (from 4 to 5 medium cloves)**
- 1 teaspoon coarsely chopped jalapeño (from ¼ medium chile)**
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin**
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt; more to taste**

Put the parsley, mint, olive oil, lime juice, garlic, jalapeño, cumin, and salt in a food processor. Process, stopping to scrape the bowl as often as needed, until puréed into a thick sauce. Add more salt to taste if needed and refrigerate until ready to use.



Argentine-Style Burger

Yields four burgers.

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
½ cup finely chopped yellow onion
(from ½ medium-small onion)
2 tablespoons finely chopped garlic
(from 5 to 7 medium cloves)
1 tablespoon finely chopped jalapeño
(from ¾ medium chile)
Kosher salt and freshly ground
black pepper
1½ pounds ground round (85% lean)
1½ teaspoons ground cumin
1½ teaspoons dried oregano
¼ cup finely chopped fresh cilantro
4 5- to 6-inch pita pockets
Thin red onion slices (optional)
Lettuce leaves (optional)
Chimichurri Sauce (recipe at left)

In a medium skillet, heat 1 table-
spoon of the oil over medium heat.
Add the onion, garlic, jalapeño,
and ¼ teaspoon salt. Cook, stirring
occasionally, until softened, about
3 minutes. Transfer to a medium

bowl, let cool for 10 minutes, and
then add the ground beef, cumin,
oregano, cilantro, 1 teaspoon salt,
and several grinds of pepper. Mix
gently with your hands until just
combined. Shape the meat into four
burgers, ¾ inch thick and 4 inches
across, working the meat as little
as possible. Make a ¼-inch dent in
the center of each burger with the
tips of your middle three fingers.
Sprinkle both sides with salt.

Put a large skillet or griddle,
preferably cast iron, over high
heat and let it get very hot, about
2 minutes. (The pan is hot enough
when a drop of water evaporates
instantly.) Add the remaining
1 tablespoon oil and tilt the pan to
spread it evenly. Arrange the
burgers so there's as much space
as possible between them, reduce
the heat to medium high, and cook,
uncovered, for 5 minutes. Turn and
cook until the burger feels springy
but not mushy when poked, about

3 minutes for medium rare (or
longer if you're concerned about
undercooked meat). Cut the top
inch or so off the pitas to open up
the pockets wide enough to fit the
burgers. Serve the burgers in the
pita with red onion and lettuce,
if using, and some of the chimi-
churri sauce.

ON THE GRILL:

Charcoal: Prepare a medium-hot
fire. Cook the burgers, uncovered,
on one side for 5 minutes. Turn and
cook until the burgers feel springy
but not mushy when poked, another
4 to 5 minutes for medium rare.

Gas: Heat the grill to high. When
the interior temperature is about
500°F, cook the burgers for 3 min-
utes with the lid closed. Turn, close
the lid, and cook until the burgers
feel springy but not mushy when
poked, another 3 to 4 minutes for
medium rare.

Bob Sloan's
latest book is
Great Burgers.
He lives in New
York City. ♦

How to Make a Rustic Fruit Tart

Follow a simple formula to create freeform tarts that use pantry ingredients and your choice of ripe summer fruit

BY JOANNE CHANG

People often ask me if I bake a lot at home, and it surprises them when they hear that I almost never bake unless I'm at work. I'm spoiled by the professional kitchen there—I have every piece of equipment and every possible ingredient at my fingertips (not to mention a commercial dishwasher at my disposal). At home, I can never seem to find the right cup measure or pie plate that I want, and I always make a mess of the kitchen.

But in the summer, when I come home from the farmers' market, the baking bug invariably bites and that's when I turn to the one dessert that I do often make at home: a rustic fruit tart, also

called a galette. The dough is a breeze to make with ingredients that I always have on hand. The freeform nature of the tart means that I don't have to search for special baking equipment. And the fruit only needs to be tossed with a little sugar and flour to become an irresistible filling.

Memorable rustic tarts need a tender but sturdy dough and ripe, succulent fruit.

The tart dough can be made in advance and stored in the freezer for up to two months. Once summer rolls around, I make a few batches, press them into flat disks (they're easier to roll out that way) and freeze them, individually wrapped, to use throughout the season. The day before you plan to use the dough, simply

Use this formula to make a large fruit tart

One recipe rustic tart dough



Four cups fruit

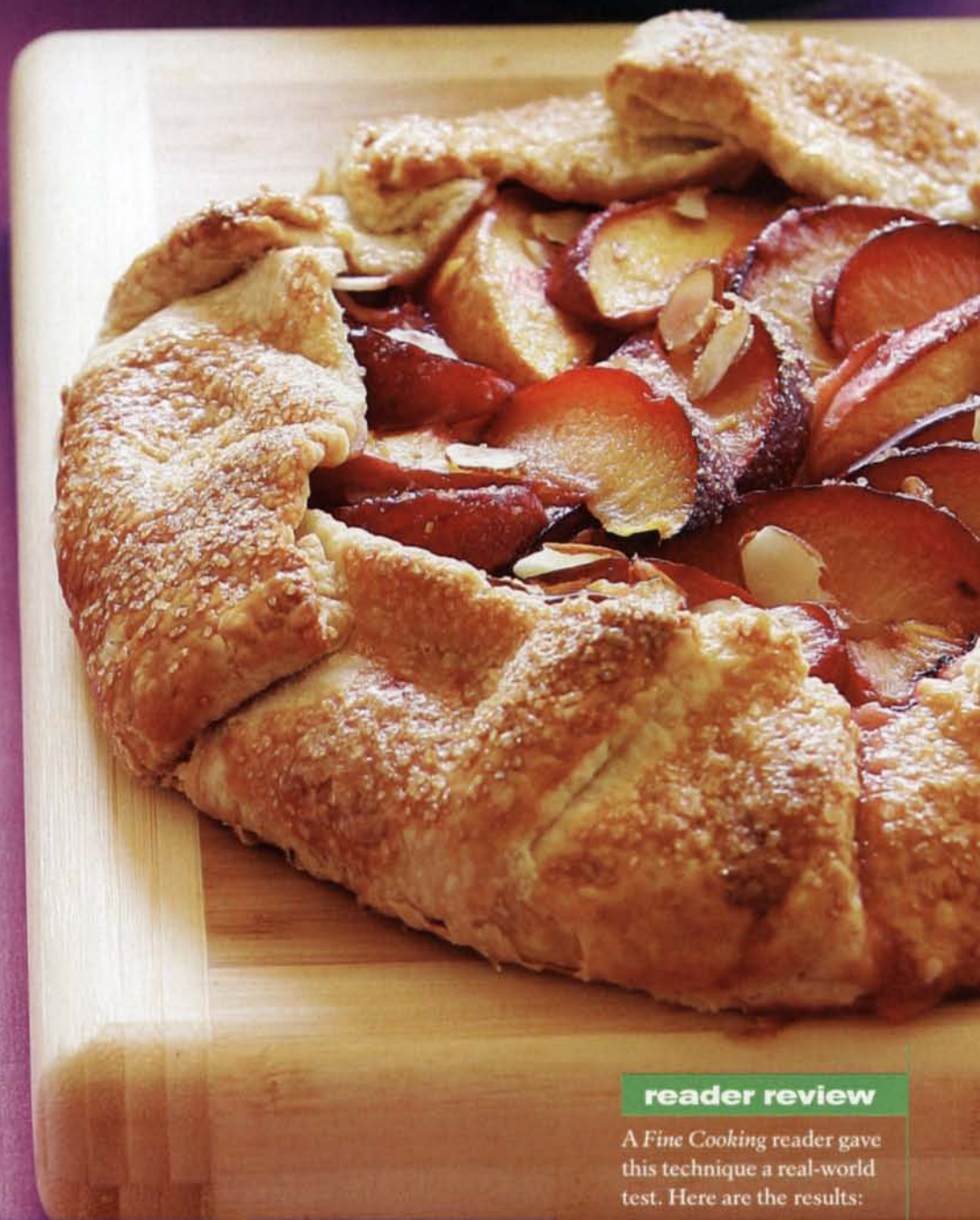


Sugar, flour, and salt for tossing



remove it from the freezer and let it thaw overnight in the fridge so that it's ready to roll the next day. If you choose to make the dough and use it right away, just let it rest for at least 15 to 20 minutes in the refrigerator right after you make it and before you roll it out.

All you need for great fruit filling is wonderfully ripe seasonal fruit, some sugar, and a little flour to thicken the juices. I've given measurements for the fruit, flour, and sugar, but don't feel you have to follow the formula exactly. These tarts are pretty forgiving, so you can usually use a little more or less of an ingredient, depending on what fruit you have on hand and what sounds scrumptious to you.



Up to two flavorings



One egg



One topping



reader review

A *Fine Cooking* reader gave this technique a real-world test. Here are the results:

"I usually avoid making pastry because I'm convinced that the crust will be tough. Not so here: the dough is very forgiving. I appreciated that I had most of the ingredients in my pantry; I only had to buy the fruit. I also liked that I could make the dough ahead of time, and that I could customize my tarts with different fruits. This will become my signature summer dessert."

—Meredith Koplinka,
Yardley, Pennsylvania

Seven steps to a rustic tart

Read the method from start to finish and gather your ingredients before you start baking.

1 Make the tart dough



Mix the flour, sugar, salt, and butter until the flour is no longer white and holds together when you clump it with your fingers. Lumps of butter should be the size of peas.



Turn the finished dough out onto a sheet of plastic, press it into a flat disk, wrap it in the plastic, and refrigerate for 15 to 20 minutes (or up to four days) before rolling it out.



2 Roll the dough

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F. Line a heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet with parchment. Remove the dough from the refrigerator; if the dough is very firm, let it sit at room temperature until it's pliable enough to roll, 10 to 15 minutes. On a floured surface, roll the dough into a round that's about 13 to 14 inches in diameter. It's all right if the edges are a little ragged. If you can't get a roughly round shape, trim the dough piece so that it's a rough circle and roll the trimmed scraps back into the dough. Transfer the dough round to the baking sheet and put it in the refrigerator while you prepare the fruit.

Rustic Tart Dough

Yields enough dough for one large tart; the finished tart serves eight.

6¾ ounces (1 ½ cups)
unbleached all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons granulated sugar
½ teaspoon table salt
5½ ounces (11 tablespoons)
cold, unsalted butter
1 large egg yolk
3 tablespoons whole milk

Combine the flour, sugar, and salt in a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment (or if mixing by hand, in a medium bowl). Cut the butter into ½-inch cubes and add them to the flour. On low speed, mix the butter and flour until the flour is no longer white and holds together when you clump it with your fingers, 1 to 2 minutes. If there are still lumps of butter larger than the size of peas, break them up with your fingers. Run a spatula along the bottom of the bowl to loosen anything stuck to the bowl. (If mixing by hand, mix with a pastry cutter or two forks until the butter is mixed into the flour as above.)

In a small bowl, mix the egg yolk and milk and add them to the flour mixture. On low speed, mix until the dough just comes together, about 15 seconds; the dough will be somewhat soft. (If mixing by hand, add the yolk mixture to the flour and mix gently with a fork until the liquid is well distributed. The dough will still look crumbly and dry. Dump the dough onto a clean counter and work it with the heel of your hand, pushing and smearing it away from you and then gathering it up with a bench scraper and repeating until the dough comes together and is pliable.)

Turn the dough out onto a sheet of plastic wrap, press it into a flat disk, wrap it in the plastic, and let it rest in the refrigerator for 15 to 20 minutes (or up to four days) before rolling it out. You can also freeze the dough for up to two months; thaw it overnight in the refrigerator.

Do-ahead tip:

The dough can be refrigerated for up to four days or frozen for up to two months; thaw it overnight in the refrigerator.

Rolling tips:

When you roll out the dough, be sure to keep your work surface well floured. If there's too little flour under the dough, it will be difficult to roll and will stick to the surface. It's also helpful to pass a bench scraper under the dough after every few swipes of the rolling pin, to ensure that the dough isn't sticking to your work surface (just reflower lightly if it is.) And if the dough sticks to the pin, sprinkle a little flour on the top of the dough.



4 Toss the fruit with sugar, flour, salt, and flavorings

Toss the fruit with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup granulated sugar, 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour, and a big pinch of salt. If you want to add optional flavorings (choose from the list below), toss them into the fruit now too, making sure to mix them in evenly.

Note: Taste your fruit before adding the sugar; if it's more tart than you like, you may want to add a little more than $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar (up to a few tablespoons more).

Flavorings (Choose up to two)

- ❖ $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pure almond extract or 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ❖ 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest or 1 tablespoon finely grated orange zest
- ❖ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup toasted, coarsely chopped pecans or toasted sliced almonds
- ❖ 2 tablespoons honey
- ❖ $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ❖ 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

3 Prepare the fruit

You'll need a total of about 4 cups of fruit. Choose one or combine two, and prepare them following the list below. (Note: If you choose raspberries, use them in combination with another fruit. A raspberry-only tart will be too tart.) Put the fruit in a large bowl.

Fruit

(Choose one or two)

- ❖ apples, peeled and thinly sliced
- ❖ apricots, thinly sliced
- ❖ blueberries
- ❖ nectarines, thinly sliced
- ❖ peaches, thinly sliced
- ❖ pears, thinly sliced
- ❖ plums, thinly sliced
- ❖ raspberries



5 Assemble the fruit tart

Remove the dough from the refrigerator and let it sit at room temperature for about 5 minutes to keep it from cracking when you assemble the tart.

To assemble the tart, heap the fruit in the center of the dough round. Using your fingertips, fold the edges of the dough over some of the fruit to create a rim about 2 inches wide. Work your way all the way around, pleating the dough as you go.

Continued...

Tip:

If you're making a tart that includes sliced fruit, try arranging a few slices on top of the center of the tart so that it's crowned with a fan of fruit.



6 Make an egg wash and sprinkle the dough with sugar

Make a simple egg wash by beating a whole egg well in a small bowl with a fork. Using a pastry brush, brush the pleated dough evenly with the egg wash (you won't use it all). To add a crunchy touch to the crust, sprinkle about 2 tablespoons of a topping (choose one from the list below) directly on the dough and fruit.

Toppings

(choose one)

- ❖ granulated sugar
- ❖ brown sugar
- ❖ sanding sugar
- ❖ turbinado sugar (sugar in the raw)
- ❖ demerara sugar
- ❖ muscovado sugar

(For more on these sugars, see *From Our Test Kitchen*, p. 69.)

One of Joanne Chang's favorite fruit filling combinations: blueberries with lemon zest.



7 Bake the tart

Bake the tart until the pleats of dough are completely golden brown without a trace of pale, unbaked dough, about 55 minutes. (It's all right if some of the juices escape from the tart and seep onto the pan.) Transfer to a rack and let cool. The tart may be baked up to six hours ahead of serving.

When cool enough to handle, use a spatula to transfer the tart to a serving plate or cutting board. Slice it and serve it warm or at room temperature. Serve the slices with a dollop of whipped cream or a scoop of vanilla ice cream, if you like.



To make four individual tarts instead of one large one, follow the same method laid out here with a few adjustments. When you're finished mixing the dough, portion it into four equal pieces (about 3½ ounces each) before pressing them into disks and wrapping them in plastic; refrigerate. Roll the dough into rounds about 7 inches in diameter and portion the fruit evenly among the rounds. Pleat the dough around the fruit to make a 1-inch rim. Bake the tarts for 50 to 55 minutes.

If you've never made a tart before, get the hang of making a single large one before attempting the mini versions.

My favorite combinations


- ❖ blueberries, lemon zest; granulated sugar
- ❖ peaches, apricots, almonds, almond extract; brown sugar
- ❖ apples, cinnamon, vanilla extract; demerara sugar
- ❖ apricots, honey; turbinado sugar
- ❖ apples, honey, pecans; muscovado sugar
- ❖ plums, cherries, almond extract; sanding sugar

Joanne Chang is the chef-owner of Flour Bakery + Café in Boston. ♦

Fire Up the Grill to Make a Great Summer Salad

BY ELIZABETH KARMEL

To me, just about everything tastes better grilled—and that includes salads. (My mantra isn't "If you can eat it, you can grill it!" for nothing.) Have you ever noticed that a grilled steak gets twice the raves of a non-grilled one? Well, I've watched this happen



Charred Onion Salad with Prosciutto & Parmigiano Reggiano (recipe on the following page)

Charred Onion Salad with Prosciutto & Parmigiano Reggiano

Serves four.

You need thin metal skewers, or wooden ones that have been soaked in water for 30 minutes.

4 large red onions, peeled
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil; more for brushing and drizzling
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 1-inch-thick slices country bread
2 cloves garlic, cut in half
¼ cup balsamic vinegar
⅓ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
4 thin slices prosciutto, cut into ½-inch-wide, 2-inch-long strips
8 large pieces shaved Parmigiano Reggiano; more to taste

Heat a gas grill to medium or prepare a medium charcoal fire. (Be sure the grate is hot, too.) While the grill is heating, trim the ends off the onions and slice the onions into ¾-inch-thick rounds. Spear each round with a skewer through one side and straight through the center to keep the onion rings intact (each skewered onion will resemble a lollipop). Break off excess lengths of the wooden skewers, leaving about 2 inches exposed for removing the skewers after grilling. Brush the onions with olive oil. Season with salt and set aside.

When the grill is hot, arrange the onion skewers on the grate directly over the heat and grill, turning every few minutes as needed, until the onions are soft and well charred, about 20 minutes total. Remove from the grill, take the onions off the skewers, discard any crisp, blackened outer rings, and wrap the onions in foil. Set aside for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, lightly brush olive oil on both sides of each slice of bread and lightly sprinkle with salt. Put the bread directly on the cooking grate and grill on both sides to toast, about 2 minutes per side. Immediately after grilling, rub with the cut side of the garlic on both sides. Set aside.

In a small bowl, whisk the olive oil with the balsamic vinegar and season with salt and pepper to taste. Unwrap the onions and put the rings in a medium bowl; toss with about half the balsamic vinaigrette.

To serve on individual plates, put a slice of toast on each of four plates and drizzle with the remaining dressing. Top each slice with an equal amount of the charred onions. Drizzle with a little olive oil, if you like. Sprinkle on the parsley, prosciutto, and Parmesan shavings. Season with freshly ground pepper and serve.

To serve on a platter, cut the bread into crouton-size cubes, toss with the dressed charred onions and the remaining dressing, season with pepper to taste, and top with the parsley, prosciutto, and Parmesan shavings.

over and over, and it got me thinking: If grilling does wonders for steak, shouldn't it do the same for salad?

It all started when I was looking for ways to jazz up ordinary grilled vegetables, something beyond flavored butters or vinaigrettes. I wanted explosive flavors, attention-grabbing textures, and zippy colors. In short, I was trying to create vegetable dishes that I would truly hunger for and not consume simply because I know I should eat more vegetables. As I mulled over the options, I decided that salads possess all the qualities I was looking for: contrasting textures, complimentary flavors, and, in the best cases, an element of surprise. By adding the intense flavors of grilled vegetables to the mix, I knew I couldn't go wrong.

The joy of caramelization. Even hot-house vegetables taste sweet and flavorful when grilled because the cooking process concentrates their natural sugars, which the high heat then browns or "caramelizes." Next time you have a cookout, try this little experiment: Boil a few asparagus spears in salted water until bright green. Next, brush a few of the spears lightly with olive oil, sprinkle with salt, and cook on a hot grill until browned on all sides. Now call over a friend and taste each one. I've done this experiment lots of times with my friends, and 99.9% of the time, the grilled entry wins.

The elements of an unforgettable grilled salad

It takes variety to keep my palate interested. Toss grilled vegetables with fresh greens and you're off to a great start, but it's even more exciting to include other elements as well. I like to add:

Something savory. A bit of cheese or meat or both can do wonders for a salad's flavor, while also making it more substantial. I added prosciutto and shaved Parmigiano Reggiano to the Charred Onion Salad at left. And the Grilled Mushroom Salad at right has Comté cheese, a French Gruyère with a complex, nutty flavor.



Something crunchy. Salads are more satisfying when they contain crunchy nuts or grilled bread. To see what I mean, try the Grilled Mushroom Salad at right (it's got hazelnuts).

Something starchy. Adding a starch such as rice, bulgur, couscous, pasta—even bread—turns a grilled salad into a more substantial dish. Give me a plate of the Chopped Vegetable & Couscous Salad on p. 59 or the Charred Onion Salad, which contains grilled Italian bread, and, frankly, I don't need anything else.

A confession

As much as I love adding savory, crunchy, and starchy elements to grilled salads, the truth is, sometimes all a salad needs is a killer dressing. Case in point: the Grilled Romaine Hearts with Blue Cheese Dressing & Bacon on p. 58. The juxtaposition of warm, smoky, wilted romaine (don't be wary of grilled lettuce—you'll love it) with creamy blue cheese and salty bacon makes this the one salad I crave so much that it almost seems like a guilty pleasure.



Grilled Mushroom, Arugula & Comté Salad

Serves four.

1 pound large whole fresh shiitake or portabella mushrooms, or a mix
5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil;
more for drizzling

Kosher salt

4 cups baby arugula, washed and dried
¼ cup hazelnuts, toasted and roughly chopped

2 ounces Comté or Gruyère, thinly sliced with a vegetable peeler

Fleur de sel or flaky sea salt

Freshly ground white or black pepper

Heat a gas grill to medium high or prepare a medium-hot charcoal fire. (Be sure the grate is hot, too.) Wipe the mushrooms clean and trim off the stems. If using portabellas, scrape out the black gills with the side of a spoon. Put the clean whole mushrooms in a large bowl, drizzle with 5 tablespoons of the oil, and gently toss. Sprinkle in a pinch of kosher salt and toss again. Grill the mushrooms directly over the heat until tender and well marked, 3 to 5 minutes on each side. If using portabellas, quickly cut the grilled mushrooms into 1-inch slices.

Portion the arugula among four plates and top with the hot mushrooms. Garnish with the nuts and cheese and a generous drizzle of olive oil. Sprinkle lightly with fleur de sel or other sea salt and a grind of white or black pepper. Serve immediately.

Tips for grilling vegetables



Arrange the vegetables in the opposite direction of the cooking grate to keep them from falling into the fire.

Turn the vegetables with tongs. Slide the tongs gently under the center of the food in the thickest part when turning.

In general, turn the vegetables only once halfway through the cooking time.

Remove vegetables like zucchini and asparagus when they're crisp-tender; they'll continue to cook after they come off the grill. Bell peppers and eggplant, however, should be grilled until soft all the way through.

Taste the grilled vegetables while they're still warm, and if they need more salt, add it before the vegetables cool down.

Experiment with all kinds of vegetables. Even Brussels sprouts taste better from the grill.

Always coat the vegetables with a thin layer of olive oil to help them cook evenly.

Sprinkle with kosher salt or sea salt (and freshly ground pepper, if you like). The salt is essential: It helps draw out the natural sugars and promote caramelization. I prefer Morton kosher salt for grilled food because it has large grains that don't melt quickly.

When grilling vegetables, the grill fire, whether charcoal or gas, should be medium to medium hot. If the grill is too hot, the vegetables will burn on the outside and be undercooked inside. Be sure the cooking grate is clean and hot.

More ideas for grilled salads



Improvising grilled salads is easy. Just grill your favorite vegetables and pair them with at least one savory and one crunchy ingredient.

Smoky Caprese salad: Rub garlic on grilled Italian bread, top with grilled tomato slices, basil, fresh mozzarella, and extra-virgin olive oil.

Wilted Caesar: Grill romaine hearts (as at right) and slices of bread, chop both, and toss with your favorite Caesar dressing and grated Parmesan.

Grilled chopped salad: Grill assorted vegetables, chop into 1/2-inch pieces, and toss with crumbled cheese, bacon (or grilled chicken), and chopped lettuce.

Grilled Asian salad: Grill scallions and unshucked corn. Chop the scallions and cut the corn from the cob. Mix with soba noodles and toss with a sesame-soy vinaigrette.



Grilled Hearts of Romaine with Blue Cheese Dressing

Serves four; yields 2 cups dressing.

The dressing recipe makes more than you need for four portions of salad, but it keeps for two weeks in the refrigerator.

FOR THE DRESSING:

1 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup sour cream
1/4 cup whole milk; more as needed
6 ounces crumbled blue cheese, such as Roquefort or Danish Blue; more to taste
1 1/2 tablespoons finely grated shallot
1 clove finely grated garlic
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper; more to taste

FOR THE SALAD:

2 hearts of romaine lettuce, bases trimmed but left intact, halved lengthwise
Extra-virgin olive oil for brushing
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 slices smoked bacon, cooked and crumbled (I prefer applewood)

Make the dressing: In a medium bowl, stir the mayonnaise, sour cream, milk, blue cheese, shallot, garlic, lemon juice, salt, and

pepper. Cover and refrigerate for at least 3 hours to let the flavors develop. Before using, taste and adjust the seasonings if necessary. The dressing will thicken as it sits and may need to be thinned with more milk.

Prepare the salad: Once the dressing is chilled, heat a gas grill to medium low or prepare a medium-low charcoal fire. (Be sure the grate is hot, too.) Lightly brush olive oil all over the romaine hearts, taking care not to break the leaves. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Put the lettuce cut side down on the grate, directly over the heat. Grill until the outer leaves are charred and wilted and the lettuce is warm and just barely tender all the way through to the core, 2 to 5 minutes, depending on the heat of your grill. Transfer the lettuce to a clean platter and let rest for 5 minutes.

To serve: Place half a heart of romaine, cut side up, on each plate, top with about 2 tablespoons of the blue cheese dressing, or more to taste, and sprinkle with the crumbled bacon. Serve immediately.



Chopped Vegetable & Couscous Salad with Black Olive Vinaigrette

Serves ten to twelve.

FOR THE VINAIGRETTE:

1/3 cup red-wine vinegar or sherry vinegar
1/4 cup finely chopped black olives,
such as Kalamatas
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
2/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
Freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE SALAD:

Extra-virgin olive oil for brushing
Kosher salt
1 yellow bell pepper
3 small carrots, peeled and left whole
3 medium zucchini, cleaned, trimmed, and
cut lengthwise into 1/2-inch-thick slices
1 small radicchio, core left in and cut
lengthwise into quarters
1 medium eggplant, cut into 1/2-inch rounds
1 small bunch scallions, trimmed

FOR THE COUSCOUS:

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon sea salt; more to taste
1 3/4 cups raw couscous
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh mint,
basil, or flat-leaf parsley, or a mix
Freshly ground black pepper
Fresh lemon juice to taste

Heat a gas grill to medium high or prepare a medium-hot charcoal fire. (Be sure the grate is hot, too.)

Make the vinaigrette: In a small bowl, whisk the vinegar, 1 tablespoon of the olives, and the mustard. Whisk in the olive oil in a slow, steady stream, making sure it's emulsified before adding more oil. Whisk in the remaining olives. Season to taste with pepper.

Grill the vegetables: Brush a light coating of oil onto the vegetables and sprinkle lightly with salt. Lay the whole yellow pepper, the carrots, and as many of the remaining vegetables as will fit on the cooking grate, directly over the heat. Grill, turning every few minutes as needed, until the pepper is charred all over and the rest of the vegetables are well marked and tender. Grilling time will vary: The zucchini, radicchio, and scallions cook fastest, the eggplant will take a little longer, and the carrots and pepper may take up to 15 minutes more. As they finish cooking, transfer the vegetables to a large platter and add more raw vegetables to the grill. Continue until all the vegetables are cooked. Let cool slightly.

Make the couscous and finish the salad:

While the vegetables cool, bring 2 cups of water, along with the oil and salt, to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add the couscous. Stir well, remove from heat, cover, and let sit for 5 minutes.

When the pepper is cool enough to handle, peel and seed it. Coarsely chop all the vegetables. Transfer them to a large serving bowl and toss them with 1/2 cup of the vinaigrette.

When the couscous is done, fluff it with a fork and add it to the vegetables. Add the remaining vinaigrette and the chopped herbs. Toss to distribute evenly. Season with salt, pepper, and lemon juice to taste. Serve warm or at room temperature. This salad can be covered and refrigerated for up to three days.

Elizabeth Karmel is the author of Taming the Flame: Secrets for Hot-and-Quick Grilling and Low-and-Slow BBQ. She's also the founder of the grilling web site Girlsatthegrill.com. ♦

Cooking with Fresh

Learn to coax the best out of four common fresh chiles, and make some great Tex-Mex favorites

To many cooks, fresh chiles are something of a mystery. You know they're spicy...or maybe very spicy...or even incendiary. But telling one from another—let alone how to use them—is another story. Learning how to coax that uniquely satisfying combination of heat and flavor out of fresh chiles will bring a bold new bravado to your cooking style, and it's well worth it.

Fresh chiles are usually harvested in the green stage. Fully ripened red ones are most often used for drying, but they also turn up fresh in the market for a brief period in the fall. Before shopping, it's always a good idea to look at a photo of the chile your recipe calls for—just in case your grocer calls it by another name (see the sidebar on p. 63).

You can certainly use fresh chiles raw by including sliced or minced serrano or jalapeño in your guacamole or Chinese stir-fry. Raw chiles are a must in Thai green curry, and jalapeño slices are always

found on the garnish plates at Vietnamese restaurants.

But in my experience, the best way to get great flavor out of green chiles is to roast them, either in a dry skillet, on the grill, under a broiler, or over a gas flame. Think about the difference in flavor between fresh red peppers and roasted red peppers and you quickly appreciate what happens to a fresh green chile when you roast it. First of all, the chile becomes sweeter-tasting and the flesh becomes meatier. But equally important, cooking rounds out the heat, making it mellower and dispersing it more evenly. And there's an added benefit—the cellophane-like skin on the outside of the chile slips off easily after the chile has been roasted and cooled.

The recipes that follow—easy quesadillas, a versatile green chile sauce, stacked enchiladas, a classic salsa, and sirloin tacos—each use a different green chile to its best advantage.



Roast fresh chiles for the best flavor—here's how

You can use these techniques for any of the chile varieties in these recipes. It doesn't work well with habaneros or other tiny, hot chiles.

Char first...

For one or two peppers (gas stoves only): Coat each chile with a little vegetable oil. Roast a chile directly on the grate of a gas stove over high heat, turning occasionally until it's charred all over.

For a batch of peppers (gas or charcoal grills; gas or electric stoves): Coat each chile with a little

vegetable oil. Grill over a hot charcoal fire or gas grill, covered. Or put the oiled chiles on a foil-lined baking sheet and broil as close to the element as possible, turning the chiles so they char evenly.

...then steam, peel, and seed

Put the charred chiles in a bowl while they're still hot

and cover with plastic. Let them rest until they're cool enough to handle, about 15 to 30 minutes. Pull on the stem: the seed core will pop out. Cut the chile open, flick off any seeds, and turn skin side up. With a paring knife, scrape away the charred skin. Don't rinse the chiles; you'll dilute their flavor.

Green Chiles

BY ROBB WALSH



Poblano

Fat, wide, and dark green, the poblano is rich in flavor. Poblanos are one of the most commonly used chiles in Central Mexican cooking, both fresh and dried. Named after the Mexican city of Puebla, where they probably originated, poblanos are generally roasted and peeled before use, though they can also be sautéed.

Heat: Medium

Good in: Chile relleno dishes, quesadillas, any melted cheese dish. Like Anaheims (see p. 62), poblanos are good roasted, cut into strips, and used as a flavoring for tacos, fajitas, or quesadillas.

Also called: Ancho or pasilla

In dried form: Called an ancho

Poblano & Ham Quesadillas

Yields 8 quesadillas.

This is a great, simple appetizer or light supper that uses strips of roasted poblanos also known as rajas.

½ pound mozzarella, grated (to yield 2 cups)

8 very thin slices Serrano ham, prosciutto, or other good cured ham

8 to 10 ounces fresh poblanos, roasted, peeled, seeded (see the method at left), and cut into ¼-inch strips (to yield about ⅔ cup)

8 small (5½- to 6-inch) flour tortillas

4 teaspoons unsalted butter

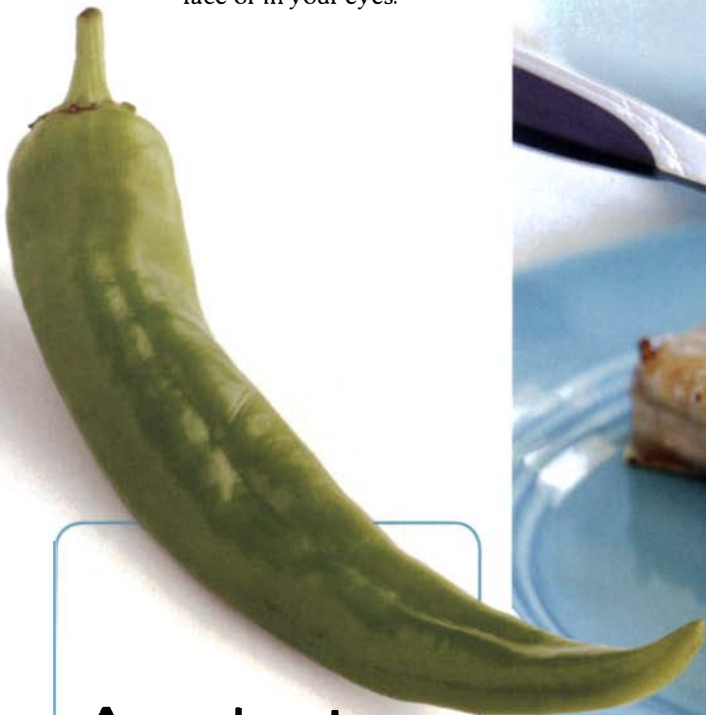
Distribute the cheese, ham, and poblano strips equally over one half of each of the

flour tortillas. Fold the tortillas in half. In a 10-inch skillet, heat 1 teaspoon of the butter over medium heat. When the butter starts to bubble, add two of the folded tortillas and toast until the cheese melts and the tortilla is crisp, 2 to 3 minutes, flipping halfway through. Repeat with the remaining butter and quesadillas. Serve piping hot.

IDEA: Roasted poblano or Anaheim strips, called rajas, taste great in a melted cheese snack—just combine the chiles and Monterey Jack or mozzarella in a small oven-proof dish and set under the broiler until the cheese bubbles. Serve on crusty bread or tortillas.

Handling tip:

It's wise to wear rubber gloves when handling hot chiles so you don't get any juice on your face or in your eyes.



Anaheim

These are one of the only chiles most New Mexicans and West Texans use, so they just call it a "green chile" (until it ripens and becomes a "red chile"). In the rest of the country, most of us call it an Anaheim. This light green chile has a pleasant vegetal flavor and ranges from slightly warm to medium hot. Anaheims are usually roasted and peeled before they're used.

Heat: Mild to medium

Good in: Roasted and cut into strips called *rajas*, Anaheims can be used as a condiment on tacos and fajitas, and they make a great garnish. Use them diced or puréed for green chile sauce.

Also called: long green, Hatch, New Mexico, Chimayo

In dried form: called a red chile or chile Colorado



Green Chile Sauce

Yields about 4 cups.

You can make this sauce for the Stacked Enchiladas at right a day ahead. It's also delicious napped over grilled chicken, swordfish, and pork, or serve cold as a simple table condiment.

7 to 8 ounces tomatillos (about 5 medium)
1 quart homemade or low-salt chicken broth
1 ¼ to 1 ½ pounds fresh Anaheim chiles (6- to 8-inch chiles), roasted, peeled, and seeded (see the method on p. 60), coarsely chopped
2 teaspoons minced yellow onion
1 teaspoon dried oregano (or 2 teaspoons chopped fresh oregano)
1 clove garlic, minced
½ teaspoon kosher salt; more to taste
¼ teaspoon ground white pepper
2 tablespoons cornstarch, dissolved in 2 tablespoons water
Your favorite hot sauce (optional)

Put a medium saucepan of water on to boil and remove the papery outer skin from the tomatillos. Boil the tomatillos until soft, 5 to 10 minutes. Drain and purée in a blender or food processor. Return the tomatillos to the saucepan along with the chicken broth, chopped green chiles, minced onion, oregano, garlic, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat and then reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Add the cornstarch slurry; stir well. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until the sauce is thickened slightly and reduced to 4 to 4½ cups, another 5 to 15 minutes. Adjust the seasonings if needed, including hot sauce if the sauce isn't spicy enough to suit your taste.



Stacked Green Chile & Grilled Chicken Enchiladas

Serves four.

Green chiles and chicken is a favorite combination in West Texas and New Mexico, where these stacked enchiladas are more common than the rolled kind. The chicken can also be cooked under the broiler or on a grill pan, and you can make the sauce ahead.

2 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
3 tablespoons olive oil; more as needed
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
12 small (5½- to 6-inch) corn tortillas
Green Chile Sauce (at right), heated
6 ounces grated Monterey Jack cheese
(2 lightly packed cups)
Chopped fresh cilantro for garnish (optional)

Heat a gas grill to medium high or build a medium-hot charcoal fire. Coat the chicken with olive oil and season generously with salt and pepper. Grill the chicken breasts until just cooked through, 4 to 5 minutes per side. When cool enough to handle, slice into thin strips. Heat the oven to 450°F.

In a small skillet, heat the 3 tablespoons oil over medium-high heat until very hot (dip the edge of a tortilla in to check; it should sizzle straight away). Using tongs, set a tortilla in the hot oil and cook until soft and

lightly brown on each side, 15 to 20 seconds per side. Transfer to paper towels to cool and drain. If the pan gets dry, add another tablespoon of oil.

In a baking dish large enough to accommodate four separate stacks of tortillas (a 10x15-inch Pyrex dish is good), ladle a thin layer of sauce. Lay four tortillas in the dish and ladle about ½ cup of sauce over them. Divide half the chicken among the first layer of tortillas and top with another ½ cup of sauce and a third of the cheese. Stack on another four tortillas, and top with the rest of the chicken, then more sauce and another third of the cheese. Finish with a third tortilla layer, and top with the remaining sauce and cheese. Bake until the sauce has thickened somewhat, about 20 minutes. The edges of the top tortilla in each stack will turn golden, but if they look like they're drying out too much or burning, occasionally spoon some sauce over them. Let rest for 5 to 10 minutes before serving. To serve, transfer each stack with a spatula to a dinner plate. Spoon any sauce left in the baking dish over the stacks and sprinkle with chopped cilantro if you like.

VARIATION: Use small gratin dishes to make individual servings.

Chile names can be confusing

The names used for specific chiles vary across the United States—you'll notice in the chile guides on these pages that some chiles also go by an alias, which can make shopping pretty confusing. Take the big green poblano and its dried form, the ancho, for instance. Poblano and ancho are the names used in Central Mexico and in most reference and cookbooks in the United States. But on the Pacific Coast of Mexico, the poblano is called a pasilla or ancho in both the fresh and dried forms.

Since most of the Mexican-Americans in Southern California come from the Pacific states (rather than the Central states), their nomenclature is used in Los Angeles (no, not all of California). But not only there: Many grocers on America's eastern seaboard buy their chiles from the huge vegetable distribution center called the L.A. Produce Terminal. So, food stores in New York, Boston, and Washington DC often use the Pacific Mexican nomenclature for chiles, too.

—R. W.

Why one chile can be hot (and another not)

Chiles can be unpredictable. Sometimes a chile you expect to be hot, like a jalapeño, will have next to no heat. And sometimes a chile that's supposed to be mild, like an Anaheim, will tingle noticeably. There are a couple of explanations for this variation.

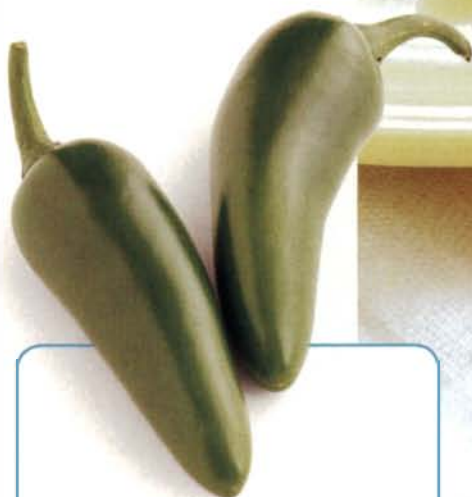
GROWING CONDITIONS.

Warmth and water play a large part. "The main reason for heat difference in the same variety of chile is stress on the plant—specifically, hot temperatures and lack of water. Chiles grown in drier, hotter weather will produce more capsaicin," says Denise Coon of the Chile Pepper Institute at New Mexico State University.

SEED SOURCE. Horticulturists provide chile growers with seeds which have been certified to be a particular variety, and which usually produce chiles of a predictable heat level. But when you buy your chiles at the store, there's no way to know the seed source. And even growers sometimes report wide variations in heat levels even from two chiles grown on the same plant.

In the end, the only way to tell the exact heat of a chile is by tasting it.

—R. W.



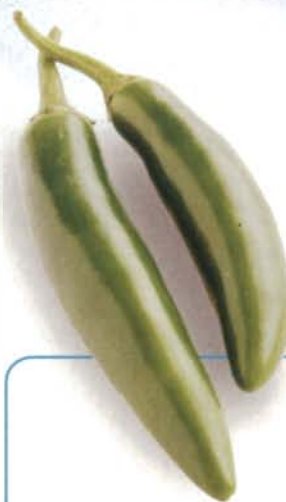
Jalapeño

The classic Tex-Mex hot chile and one of the world's best-known. Originally grown in Mexico, it's named for Jalapa, a town in the state of Veracruz. The fresh jalapeño has a strong, vegetal flavor to go with the heat. Although many Americans prefer to cook with fresh jalapeños, the jalapeño is most widely consumed in the United States in its pickled form. Red jalapeños are common in the fall.

Heat: Hot

Good in: Salsas, stir-fries, soups, vegetable stews; Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, and Indo-Pakistani cuisine as well as Mexican and Tex-Mex cooking.

In smoke-dried form: Called a chipotle



Serrano

Similar to the jalapeño, the serrano is hotter and usually smaller. Often serranos have a fuller, more herbaceous flavor than jalapeños.

Heat: Hot

Good in: Salsas, and any place you'd use a jalapeño.

In dried form: Called a chile seco



Roasted Tomato Salsa

Yields about 2 cups.

Serranos are generally hotter than jalapeños, but they're also smaller, so you can use either, in the same quantity.

½ medium yellow onion, finely diced
1½ tablespoons fresh lime juice (from about ½ lime); more to taste
6 medium Roma tomatoes
3 fresh jalapeño or serrano chiles, halved lengthwise, stemmed, and seeded
1 clove garlic, peeled
1 cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro
1½ teaspoons kosher salt; more to taste

In a small bowl, soak the onion in the lime juice for 15 minutes. In a dry, heavy-duty skillet (preferably cast iron) over high heat, "roast" the tomatoes, chile halves, and garlic clove until charred on all sides, about 2 to 5 minutes for the garlic, 8 to 10 minutes for the chiles, and 12 to 15 minutes for the tomatoes. Pulse in a blender; the mixture should remain slightly chunky. Transfer to a serving bowl and add the onion, lime juice, cilantro, and salt. Taste and add more salt or lime juice if needed. Use immediately or cover and refrigerate for up to a week.

Sirloin Tacos

Serves eight.

Serve these with the roasted tomato salsa at left, as well as chopped lettuce, cilantro sprigs, sour cream, and your other favorite taco condiments.

1 tablespoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon Hungarian paprika
1 teaspoon dried granulated garlic
1 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
1 teaspoon dried thyme
2 pounds sirloin steak, about 1 inch thick
12 to 16 small (5½- or 6-inch) flour or corn tortillas, warmed
Roasted Tomato Salsa (see the recipe at left)

In a small bowl, combine the salt, paprika, garlic, pepper, and thyme; blend well. Sprinkle both sides of the steak with the dry rub and then rub it in. Let the meat sit for half an hour at room temperature.

To cook on a charcoal grill, light the charcoal (preferably hardwood) in a chimney starter. Pour the hot coals into the grill so that the coals are banked to one side. Put the grill grate on the grill. When the coals are coated in gray ash and you can hold your hand 1 to 2 inches above the grate for 2 seconds, set the meat directly above the coals to sear it until dark grill marks form, about 3 minutes per side. Or, heat one area of a gas grill on high and another on low. Set the meat on the grates on the high side and sear it until dark grill marks form, about 3 minutes per side.

When the steak is nicely marked by the hot grill on both sides, move the meat away from the coals (or to the cooler side of a gas grill) and cover the grill so it can cook indirectly. Remove the steak from the grill when it's slightly firm to the touch and registers 130° to 135°F on an instant-read thermometer for medium rare (about another 5 to 8 minutes), or 140° to 145°F for medium. Let the steak rest on a cutting board for at least 5 minutes before carving. To serve, trim the fat from the steak and slice the meat on the diagonal into thin strips. Serve with warm tortillas and roasted tomato salsa and let your guests assemble their own tacos.

Robb Walsh is the food critic for The Houston Press. His most recent books are The Tex-Mex Cookbook and Are You Really Going to Eat That? ♦

What makes it spicy?

One of the great chile myths is that the seeds contain the heat, but it's just not true. The fire in chiles comes from capsaicin, one of several pungent compounds produced in tiny glands located between the pod wall and the white spongy ribs. When you cut a chile, the knife ruptures capsaicin glands, and capsaicin spills onto the seeds, which can make them taste hot despite the fact that they themselves don't produce the fiery chemical.

Every chile is hot in its own unique way because each variety contains a unique blend of capsaicinoids. (If you eat chiles regularly, your palate will develop and, as with wine or coffee, you can actually become something of a connoisseur.)

Capsaicin is a very stable compound, so there's not much a cook can do to douse its fire. But by roasting a chile, you can intensify the other flavors lingering in the fruit so that

food science

heat isn't the only thing your taste buds notice.

If your mouth does end up on fire from overdosing on chiles, don't reach for water. It will spread the capsaicin around in your mouth, but it won't put out the flames. Instead reach for a glass of milk or a spoonful of sour cream, yogurt, or ice cream. Casein, a protein in milk, seems to strip capsaicin from the nerve receptors in your mouth.

—*Kimberly Y. Masibay,*
associate editor



Chill Out with Ice Cream Pie

BY LORI LONGBOTHAM

Few things in life are as universally adored as ice cream, and in my experience, few desserts receive more raves than ice cream pie. It always amuses me that as soon as I bring out this simple, kid-oriented dessert for company, an enthusiastic cheer erupts from even the most reserved adult guests.

Ice cream pie is ideally suited to casual summer entertaining. It must be made at least a few hours ahead, so

there's nothing to do at the last minute except pull it out of the freezer. And the method is truly as easy as one, two, three. One: Make a cookie crust. Two: Scoop or layer ice cream into the crust and drizzle on hot fudge. Three: Freeze until the ice cream firms up. You can change the ice cream flavors or gussy up the toppings to suit the moment (see the sidebar at far right), so this dessert can be as playful or sophisticated as you like.

As for whether to use store-bought ice cream or homemade, I leave that up to you. I like to use my time for the fun and creative part—making pies out of excellent store-bought ice cream. But if you have time to make your own ice cream, all the better. For the necessary equipment, consult the review of ice cream makers on pp. 26-27. For recipes for vanilla, coffee, and chocolate ice cream, visit Finecooking.com.

Triple Chocolate Ice Cream Pie

Serves eight to twelve.

This pie features a chocolate crust, chocolate ice cream, and chocolate sauce, with a few scoops of coffee and vanilla added for contrast.

6 ounces (about 30) chocolate wafer cookies
5 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted; more for greasing the pan
2 pints chocolate ice cream, slightly softened
Quick Hot Fudge Sauce (see the recipe below), at room temperature
1 pint coffee ice cream, slightly softened
1 pint vanilla ice cream, slightly softened

Position a rack in the middle of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F. Butter a 9-inch Pyrex or metal pie plate.

Put the cookies in a zip-top bag and crush them with a rolling pin (or process in a food processor) until you have fine crumbs. Measure 1½ cups of crumbs (crush more cookies, if necessary) and put them in a bowl. Add the melted butter and stir until the crumbs are evenly moistened. Transfer to the pie plate and, using your fingers, press the mixture evenly into the bottom and sides (but not on the rim). Bake for 10 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack.

Scoop 1 pint of the chocolate ice cream into the cooled crust and spread it evenly with a rubber spatula. Place in the freezer to firm up for about 30 minutes. Remove the pie from the freezer and, working quickly, drizzle ½ cup of the room-temperature fudge sauce over the ice cream. Using a small ice cream scoop (1½-inch diameter; see p. 82 for sources), scoop round balls of the chocolate, coffee, and vanilla ice creams and arrange them over the fudge sauce layer (you may not need all of the ice cream). Drizzle with about ¼ cup of the remaining fudge

sauce, using a squirt bottle if you have one. Freeze until the ice cream is firm, about 2 hours. If not serving right away, loosely cover the pie with waxed paper and then wrap with aluminum foil. Freeze for up to two weeks.

To serve, let the pie soften in the refrigerator for 15 to 30 minutes (premium ice cream brands need more time to soften). Meanwhile, gently reheat the remaining fudge sauce in a small saucepan over medium-low heat. Pry the pie out of the pan with a thin metal spatula. (If the pie doesn't pop out, set the pan in a shallow amount of hot water for a minute or two to help the crust release.) Set the pie on a board, cut into wedges, and serve drizzled with more hot fudge sauce, if you like.



Quick Hot Fudge Sauce

Yields 1½ cups.

This sauce will keep for at least two weeks in the refrigerator and for several months in the freezer.

1 cup heavy cream
2 tablespoons light corn syrup
Pinch salt
8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped (to yield about 1⅓ cups)

Bring the cream, corn syrup, and salt just to a boil in a medium-size heavy saucepan over medium-high heat, whisking until combined. Remove the pan from the heat, add the chocolate, and whisk until smooth. Let cool to a bit warmer than room temperature before using in the ice cream pie. The sauce thickens as it cools; you want it warm enough to drizzle but not so warm that it melts the ice cream.

Make it your way

The recipe at left is a blueprint for many other fabulous ice cream pies. It's all about your favorite flavors and combinations, so after you try some of my ideas below, branch out on your own. Here's how.

Vary the crust. There's a world beyond chocolate wafer crusts. Try crushed sugar cones, graham crackers, chocolate graham crackers, biscotti, shortbread, amaretti, ginger snaps, or your own favorite.

Vary the garnish. The possibilities are endless. Try crushed candy bars, fresh strawberries, chocolate-dipped dried apricots or other dried fruit, crushed toffee or brittle, or cocoa nibs.

Add crunch between layers. For textural interest, consider sprinkling crushed cookies or candies, crystallized ginger, or chocolate chips between the layers of ice cream. I've found that good-quality fruit preserves also taste great sandwiched between ice cream.

More ice cream pie ideas

- ❖ **Ginger ice cream pie.** You'll love a simple ginger snap crust filled with vanilla ice cream and topped with scoops of ginger ice cream. Dust the top with chopped crystallized ginger.
- ❖ **Refreshing sorbet pie.** Fill an amaretti cookie or graham cracker crust with vanilla ice cream and top with scoops of sorbet. Mango, pineapple, and coconut are luscious with a sprinkle of toasted coconut flakes. Or try raspberry and strawberry sorbets topped with mixed berries.
- ❖ **Peachy ice cream pie.** Fill a graham cracker or ginger snap crust with peach ice cream, top with scoops of peach sorbet, sprinkle with toasted almonds, and serve with sliced ripe peaches.
- ❖ **Banana split pie.** Try chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry ice cream in a chocolate cookie crust. Serve with chocolate, strawberry, or caramel sauces and garnish with thinly sliced bananas.
- ❖ **Mango ice cream pie.** Use mango or vanilla ice cream as the base layer in a crushed shortbread cookie crust and top with scoops of mango sorbet. Serve with sliced fresh mangos and raspberry sauce.

Lori Longbotham is the author of The Scoop: How to Change Store-Bought Ice Cream into Fabulous Desserts. ♦

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BY JENNIFER ARMENTROUT

Little tomatoes in all shapes, colors, and sizes

Tomato lovers live for this time of year. Gardens and farmers' markets overflow with all sorts of tomato varieties, and for a brief few months, the tomato hounds of the world can once again eat their fill. Last season, when we were testing the recipes for "Fresh, Fast Tomato Sauces" on p. 34, we were excited to find so many different kinds of fun little tomatoes out there—including the ones pictured here—all of which are sweet, fruity, and bursting with rich tomato flavor. In addition to tossing them into salads, we like to add them to vegetable sautés and sauces, where their concentrated flavor really shines. To find little tomatoes like these, visit farm markets or pester your gardener friends to share—if you don't grow your own, that is.



*Matt's
Wild Cherry*



*Brandywine
Grape*



Sweet 100



Red Currant



Sun Gold



White Currant



Wild Cherry

*Black
Huckleberry*



Santa Lucia



Black Cherry



Riesentraube

Today's raw sugar isn't truly raw

In the old days, brown sugar was made by incompletely refining sugar-cane syrup, meaning that some molasses—a byproduct of refining—remained in the sugar, giving it its characteristic color, flavor, and moist texture. Because it was the result of incomplete refining, this type of sugar was also known as raw sugar.

Today, most brown sugar is made by adding a molasses-like syrup back to fully refined sugar, and truly raw sugar is not legal in

the United States because it may contain mold, bacteria, and other contaminants. There are, however, a few specialty brown sugars that are sometimes marketed as raw sugars. Though these sugars may be produced using the traditional method of minimal refining—hence the use of the word “raw”—they’re purified so they aren’t technically raw. If your local market doesn’t carry any of these, see p. 82 for mail-order sources.



Muscovado sugar

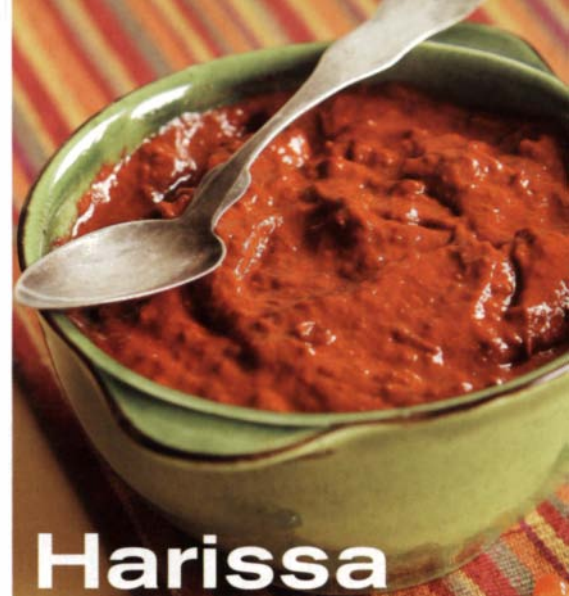
A soft, moist, fine sugar that's available in light and dark varieties (a light variety is shown). Also known as Barbados sugar because it was once made there, muscovado sugar lends a rich butterscotch flavor to baked goods, and it may be used interchangeably with regular brown sugar.

Turbinado sugar

A coarse, crunchy, golden sugar with a slight molasses flavor. Familiar to many people as the product Sugar in the Raw, it's our favorite sugar for adding sparkle and crunch to the outside of baked goods like cookies or the rustic fruit tarts on p. 50. We also like to sprinkle it over grilled fruit.

Demerara sugar

An English version of turbinado sugar, to which it's very similar except for a slightly larger crystal size. Use it as you would turbinado sugar, or follow the English lead and use it to sweeten your coffee or tea.



Harissa spices up everything from couscous to steaks

Just about every area of the world has a favorite type of chile sauce. In North Africa, it's harissa, a chile paste scented with cumin, coriander, and garlic, which is used to flavor couscous and kebabs, as well as various salads. Harissa can be quite fiery, but this rendition is a mild one based on ancho chiles (dried poblanos). The unusual additions of soy sauce and balsamic vinegar give it a uniquely savory edge. Use a dab of this sauce to punch up the Spicy & Citrusy Couscous Salad on p. 43, and then save the rest to use as a terrific condiment for grilled steaks and hamburgers.

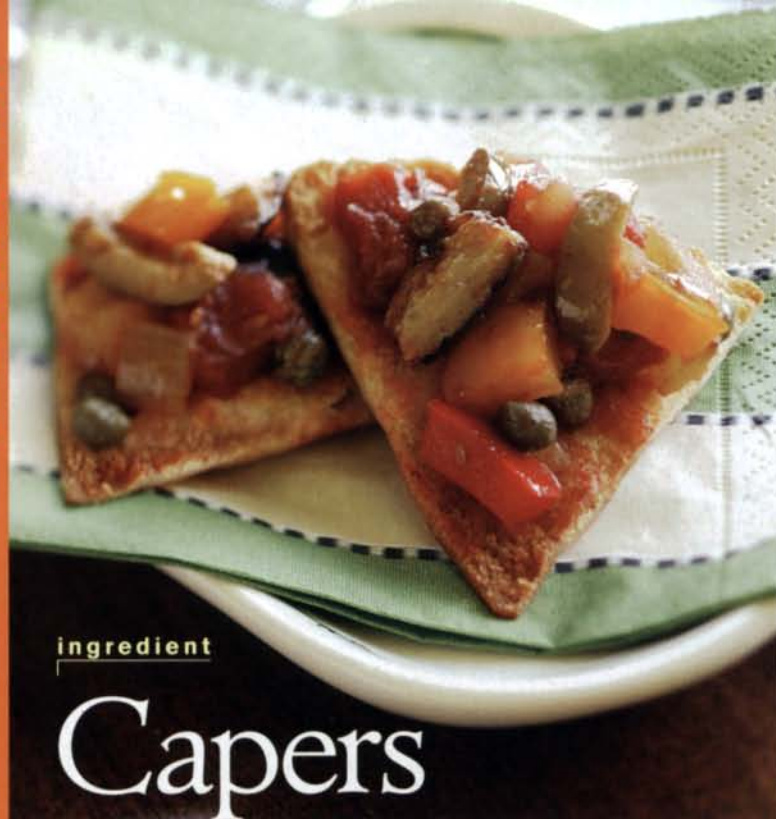
Ancho Chile Harissa

Yields about 1 cup.

5 ancho chiles, seeded and stemmed
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander
⅓ cup olive oil
2 teaspoons soy sauce
2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons cold water
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Soak the chiles in hot water until very soft, about 1 hour. Drain the chiles and transfer to a food processor; add the remaining ingredients. Purée until mostly smooth. Taste and add more salt and pepper if necessary. Store in a container with a thin layer of olive oil on top to prevent discoloration. The sauce will keep in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

—recipe by Steve Johnson,
Fine Cooking #33



ingredient

Capers

The distinctive zing in rémoulade sauce, chicken piccata, and puttanesca sauce comes from capers. Capers pack big flavor in a tiny package. These little spheres are the flower buds of a prickly shrub that grows all over the Mediterranean. Some caper shrubs are cultivated, but most grow wild, and the harvesting is done by hand. Eaten raw, capers are unpalatably bitter, but once cured in a vinegar brine or in salt, they develop an intense flavor that is all at once salty, sour, herbal, and slightly medicinal. If the buds are allowed to blossom and go to seed, they become caper berries, which are also packed in brine and can be added to salads or eaten out of hand like olives.



How to buy

Capers come in a range of sizes. The smallest size (nonpareil) is said by some to be the best; others prefer larger capers for their bolder, more interesting flavor. What you choose is a matter of personal taste and what you can find at your market.

In addition to size, there's the choice between vinegar-brined and salt-packed capers.

Brined capers have the advantage of an almost indefinite shelf life, but the vinegar sharpens their flavor. Salted capers have a pure flavor, but they don't last as long because the salt eventually pulls out all their moisture. Look for clean white salt; yellowing salt is a sign of age. All capers should be refrigerated after opening. For a mail-order source, see p. 82.

Sweet & Sour Eggplant Relish (Caponata)

Yields about 4 cups.

Tangy-sweet caponata is best made a day ahead so its flavors have time to mingle. Serve at room temperature with pita chips or other crisps as a snack or hors d'oeuvre. It keeps for about a week in the refrigerator.

- 1 medium eggplant (about 1½ pounds), unpeeled, top and bottom trimmed**
- Kosher salt**
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil; more as needed**
- 3 large inner ribs celery, sliced crosswise ½ inch thick**
- 1 small yellow onion, chopped**
- ½ yellow bell pepper, cut into ½-inch dice**
- ½ red bell pepper, cut into ½-inch dice**
- 1 14-ounce can diced tomatoes (with their juices)**
- 2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar**
- 4 teaspoons granulated sugar**
- 2 anchovy fillets, minced (optional)**
- ¼ cup green olives, pitted and slivered**
- 3 tablespoons drained and rinsed capers (coarsely chopped if large)**

Cut the eggplant into 1-inch cubes. Spread the cubes on a baking sheet lined with paper towels, sprinkle with 1 tablespoon salt, and let sit for 1 hour. Pat dry with more paper towels; there's no need to rinse.

Heat the oil in a small Dutch oven or large saucepan over medium-high heat until hot. Working in batches to

avoid crowding the pan, fry the eggplant, stirring occasionally, until deep golden brown on several sides, 5 to 6 minutes per batch. Adjust the heat as needed to keep the oil hot but not smoking. Transfer each batch with a slotted spoon to dry paper towels to drain.

Reduce the heat to medium and if the pan is dry, add 1 tablespoon oil. Add the celery, sprinkle with salt, and cook, stirring frequently, until softened with just a hint of crunch, about 5 minutes. Transfer the celery to a bowl. If the pan is dry, add 1 tablespoon oil. Add the peppers, sprinkle with salt, and cook, stirring frequently, until softened, 5 to 6 minutes. Transfer to the bowl with the celery.

If the pan is dry, add another 1 tablespoon oil. Add the onion, sprinkle with salt, and cook, stirring frequently, until softened and starting to brown around the edges, 3 to 5 minutes. Increase the heat to medium high and pour in the tomatoes and their juices. Add the vinegar, sugar, and anchovies, if using. Bring to a vigorous simmer and cook until the juices have thickened slightly to the consistency of tomato soup, 3 to 5 minutes. Add all the cooked vegetables and the olives and capers. Reduce the heat to medium and simmer for another 5 minutes. Let cool completely and then cover and refrigerate overnight. Before serving, bring to room temperature and add salt to taste.

How to use

Rinse brined capers before using. Salt-packed capers are too salty to be eaten straight from the jar; soak them in cool water for about 15 minutes and rinse in several changes of water. If the capers are large, you can chop them roughly unless you want a big burst of caper flavor.

Capers are especially good with fish and other foods that

tend to be oily or rich. In addition to the recipe above, try adding them to a vinaigrette or a butter sauce for fish or chicken, or toss a small handful into a pasta dish or potato salad. For an unusual garnish or salad addition, pat capers dry and then lightly fry them in a little olive oil. They'll get crisp and open up like the little flowers they are.

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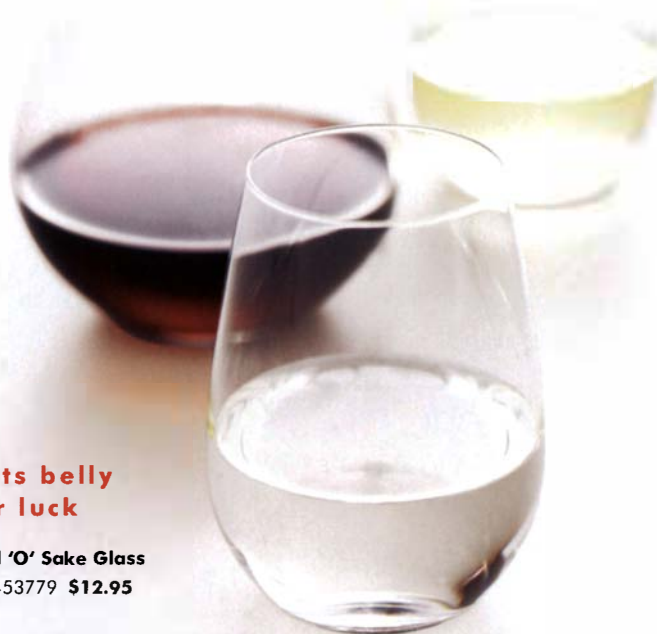
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technique class

How to make flavored butters

Some people keep chocolate-chip cookies on hand in the freezer for emergency entertaining. Flavored butters are my secret weapon. No matter the occasion or the meal, they add a touch of elegance, dressing up simple roasts and sautés or jazzing up steamed vegetables or plain pastas.

The magic of flavored butters (also known as compound butters) is that their essence remains safely locked up in a state of hibernation until the instant they're melted onto whatever you're cooking. Then, the flavors come pouring out. All it takes is a little pat of flavored butter and the most mundane of meals—a grilled

steak, a sautéed pork chop, a roasted piece of fish—becomes special.

Better yet, making flavored butters is ridiculously easy. First, look no further than the pantry or refrigerator for flavor inspiration. Citrus juice and zest, fresh herbs, spices, and full-flavored ingredients like shallots, scallions, ginger, sun-dried tomatoes, and olives complement butter's richness and give it a good punch. Next, mix and mash these bright ingredients with a stick of softened butter until they're well combined. You can do this by hand, or you can use a food processor. The food processor works especially well for emulsifying liquids

like citrus juice into the butter, and it's also handy when you don't have time to let the butter soften completely. Finally, roll up the butter in plastic wrap, parchment, or waxed paper and refrigerate for up to two weeks. For longer storage, you can slice the butter into pats and freeze in zip-top bags, where they'll be ready to go whenever you need a quick hit of flavor.

To get you started, here are recipes for two of my favorite flavored butters, plus ideas for several more. Once you get the hang of it, you'll be able to whip up flavored butters of your own invention in no time at all.

—Tony Rosenfeld, contributing editor

1 Mix and mash together all of the ingredients until they're evenly combined. Work the butter by hand or use a food processor.



2 Fold the plastic over the butter, hold a ruler against the butter, and pull on the lower end of the plastic to produce even pressure that will squeeze the butter into a uniform log.



Chipotle-Cilantro Butter

Yields about ¾ cup.

This spicy butter adds a Tex-Mex twist to a sautéed pork chop or grilled steak or some pleasant heat to baked sweet potatoes or steamed corn.

- ½ cup unsalted butter, softened to room temperature**
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro**
- 1 chipotle chile (from a can of chipotles in adobo sauce), minced, plus 1 tablespoon adobo sauce; or to taste**
- 2 teaspoons fresh lime juice**
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt**
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**

Combine all of the ingredients in a small bowl and mash together with a fork or wooden spoon until the mixture is well combined (or pulse in a food processor). Form into a log shape in plastic wrap, parchment, or waxed paper (tightening the ends as if it were a sausage) and refrigerate for up to two weeks or freeze for up to three months.

3 *Twist the ends of the plastic wrap, sausage style, and tuck them under the butter log to make a neat little package that's ready for chilling.*



Lemon-Herb Butter

Yields about ¾ cup.

This butter goes nicely with delicate flavors like chicken or fish or with stir-fried vegetables like asparagus or green beans.

- ½ cup unsalted butter, softened to room temperature**
- ¼ cup finely chopped flat-leaf parsley**
- 2 tablespoons finely diced shallots**
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme**
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh rosemary**
- Finely grated zest of 1 lemon plus 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice**
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt**
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**

Combine all of the ingredients in a small bowl and mash together with a fork or wooden spoon until the mixture is well combined (or pulse in a food processor). Shape into a log in plastic wrap, parchment, or waxed paper (tightening the ends as if it were a sausage) and refrigerate for up to two weeks or freeze for up to three months.



Lemon-Herb Butter is the perfect finishing touch for grilled salmon on a bed of sautéed corn, lima beans, and shiitake mushrooms.

Flavored butter inspiration

- ❖ Add a pat of **curry-ginger butter** to steamed basmati rice or skewered grilled shrimp.
- ❖ Melt **chile-lime butter** on sautéed chicken breasts or on sliced grilled flank steak.
- ❖ Toss steamed green beans with **almond-lemon butter** or melt on roasted fish.
- ❖ Spread **orange-cinnamon butter** on French toast, pancakes, or waffles.
- ❖ Serve **black olive-rosemary butter** with crusty bread as an hors d'oeuvres or fold into mashed potatoes.

Tips for making better burgers

Choose the right meat: When it comes to hamburgers, ground round or chuck is the only way to go, and if you've ever heard the saying "fat is where the flavor is," then you understand why. Ground round is a good choice for pan-seared burgers like the one on p. 49 because it has enough fat (10% to 15%) to keep the meat moist but not so much that the burger ends up swimming in melted fat in the pan. For grilled burgers, ground chuck is our favorite. At 15% to 20% fat, it's able to withstand the intense heat of the grill and still make for a mouthwateringly juicy burger. Excess fat simply drains through the grill grate.

Cook extra flavorings first: Smooth out the flavor of garlic, onions, and chiles by gently cooking them and then cooling them slightly before mixing them into the beef. You can toast any spices you want to use at the same time: Cook the aromatics over medium-low heat in a tablespoon or two of oil until they soften, and then add spices and cook briefly until they become fragrant. Add salt



and pepper directly to the meat (even if you're not using any other flavors).

Use a light hand: The worst thing you can do to a burger is mash and compact it into shape. Too much pressure makes a dense, heavy burger. Instead, wet your hands to keep the meat from sticking to them, and then gently pat the meat into patties. Make a deep impression in the center of each patty; this helps the burger cook evenly and keeps it from plumping into a flying saucer shape as it cooks.

Cook it safely: It's an unfortunate part of modern life that we have to be cautious with ground meat, but the grinding process increases the chance of bacterial contamination. If you want to be on the safe side, cook burgers to a minimum of 160°F. That's medium well, but if you've used the right meat (see above), your burger will still be juicy and delicious.

How to add smoke to a gas grill

It's hard to beat a gas grill when it comes to ease of use, but what you don't automatically get with a gas grill is the flavor of smoke that comes from grilling over wood or charcoal. Some gas grills come with a built-in smoker box to which you can add wood chips, but if your grill doesn't have one, you can improvise. Get a small, rectangular disposable aluminum pan and cover the bottom of the pan with a layer of wood chips that have been soaked in water for about half an hour. Put the pan under the grill grate, directly on a burner in a corner of the grill. Turn the burner onto the highest setting until the chips start to smoke and then adjust the burner settings as needed for whatever food you're grilling. If the chips stop smoking, you can crank the heat back up to get them going again as long as it won't cause the food on the grill to burn. Never throw wood chips directly on a burner, as this could clog the gas line.

Direct vs. indirect grilling

When building a charcoal fire, you can arrange the coals so that one part of the fire is hotter than the other: All you have to do is bank most of the hot coals to one side of the grill or on the outer edges of the grill, in effect creating a two-level fire. This gives you the option of direct grilling (putting the food right over the coals) or indirect grilling (putting the food on the cooler part of the grill, farthest from the hot coals, and covering the grill to create an oven-like atmosphere). You can create this effect on a gas grill by keeping

one or more burners at medium-high heat and one at low heat. By building a two-level fire, you have the flexibility to move food around if it's cooking too quickly or too slowly. Even hamburgers, chicken breasts, and steaks—which should be grilled quickly over direct heat to stay juicy—can benefit from resting on a cooler part of the grill.

Indirect grilling is the best method for cooking tougher cuts like ribs that benefit from long, slow cooking or large roasts and whole chickens and turkeys that would burn on the outside

before they're fully cooked inside if grilled over direct heat. On a charcoal grill, they need a large spot on the grill grate that isn't directly over the coals, so put a large foil pan in the center of the bottom of the grill and arrange the coals around it (the pan also catches dripping juices from the roast). You can also buy metal brackets that hold the coals to the sides of the grill. On a gas grill, put the roast or chicken on a rack inside a foil pan and put the pan directly on the grate.

—Susie Middleton, editor



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READER SERVICE NO. 35

Wasabi:

It's not just for sushi

If you're a fan of sushi and sashimi, then you're already familiar with wasabi. For the uninitiated, wasabi is the tingling-hot, sinus-clearing pasty green condiment that accompanies those popular Japanese seafood dishes. In addition to serving it with sushi, we also like to add it to mashed potatoes and to mayonnaise, as in the recipe for Grilled Salmon with Wasabi-Ginger Mayonnaise on p. 86c.

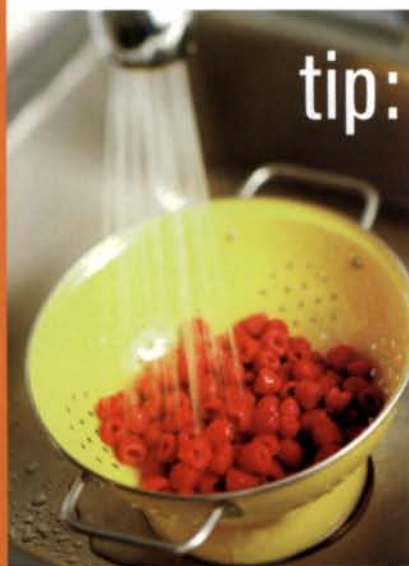
Also known as Japanese horseradish, wasabi is a member of the mustard family. Fresh wasabi is expensive and hard to find, but you can get it in powdered or paste form at Asian markets and in the Asian section of the supermarket (or see p. 82 for a mail-order source). Powdered wasabi is the better option: It has more of a kick than the commercial paste, which is primarily available as a convenience. Buy wasabi in the smallest quantity available because, like dried spices, its potency dissipates over time.



To turn powdered wasabi into wasabi paste, mix equal parts powder and tepid water and then let stand for at least 15 minutes to let the flavor develop.

tip: Wash those berries

Always wash fresh berries, even if you picked them yourself. Like any other produce, berries can pick up bacteria or other contaminants from water, soil, and handling; washing helps reduce these risks. Keep your berries cold and dry until shortly before you're ready to use them and then wash them in a colander under a gentle spray of cool water. Shake lightly to remove excess water and then spread the berries on paper towels to air-dry until you need them.



Frozen vs. canned artichoke hearts

After our blind tasting of canned Artichoke hearts (for the results, see the Tasting Panel at right), we were curious to know how frozen artichoke hearts compare to their canned brethren, so we held an informal tasting. We heated two brands of frozen artichoke hearts—Birds Eye and Trader Joe's—according to package direction and cooled them to room temperature before sampling them along with two canned brands: Fanci Food (the winner of our Tasting Panel) and Trader Joe's (a brand not included in our Tasting Panel because we generally don't include store brands, due to their limited availability).

What we discovered is that canned and frozen artichokes have rather little in common. They may start out as the same vegetable, but during the packaging process, canned and frozen artichokes become different ingredients, suited to different culinary uses.

CANNED

Taste: Toothsome texture and a bright flavor with an undeniably tangy edge.

Use in: Salads, antipasti, or any dish where a briny kick would be welcome.

FROZEN

Taste: Look and taste more like fresh, steamed artichokes. They have a natural flavor and soft texture.

Use in: Pastas, vegetable sautés and slow-cooked dishes like stews, casseroles, and gratins.

—Kimberly Y. Masibay, associate editor

Canned artichoke hearts

These days you can find artichokes in the market quite frequently, but preparing a raw artichoke heart for cooking is time-consuming. So when a recipe calls for artichoke hearts, it sometimes makes sense to reach for the canned variety. To find out which brands are good to use, we held a blind tasting of six brands available nationwide at regular and natural-foods supermarkets. According to the ingredients' labels, each can contained artichoke hearts, water, salt, and citric acid, so we were somewhat surprised at how much the flavor varied from brand to brand. Fanci Food was our clear favorite, but we also found Roland and Progresso quite likeable.

—K. Y. M.

Top Pick



FANCI FOOD

\$3.29 (14 ounces)
imported from Spain

These plump, straw-green hearts seemed fresher and delivered more pure artichoke flavor than the rest. With their firm texture and bright flavor, these hearts would be nice in salads and would also hold up to long, slow cooking. One complaint—some of the hearts had tough, fibrous leaf tips.

Runners-up Artichoke hearts numbered in order of preference; prices may vary.



2

ROLAND

\$4.99 (14 ounces)
imported from Peru

These artichokes were fresh-tasting and zippy. While a few tasters found them too tart, most found them pleasantly tangy. It's worth mentioning that their texture was curiously varied: Some of the hearts were delightfully toothsome, others disappointingly mushy.



3

PROGRESSO

\$3.29 (14 ounces)
imported from Spain

If you're looking for pure, clean artichoke flavor that's not too intense or assertive, this could be the brand for you. And with their tender toothsome texture, they'd be a perfectly decent choice for all uses, from salads to stews.



4

REESE

\$3.29 (14 ounces)
imported from Spain

Salty and citric tasting, these artichoke hearts were tough on the outside, mushy on the inside, and disturbingly gritty even after being rinsed twice. Overall, the flavor was vague with a slightly metallic undertone.



5

GOYA

\$3.45 (14 ounces)
imported from Spain

Small and nicely trimmed, these artichokes had an unspecific canned-vegetable flavor—lightly tangy but not very artichoke. A slight grittiness despite being rinsed and a metallic aftertaste brought the scores down.



6

MEDITERRANEAN ORGANIC

\$4.69 (14 ounces)
imported from Spain

Appearances can be deceiving: These dainty hearts were neatly trimmed and a very pretty shade of straw green. They were also the least pleasant of the bunch. Mushy, tart, and processed-tasting, these hearts reminded tasters of canned peas with a metallic edge.

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A Sticky Situation

Why food sticks to pans and how to prevent it

BY PETER BARHAM

It's happened to all of us: Just as you go to turn out the perfect upside-down cake to impress your dinner guests, it sticks to the dish and crumbles into pieces over the serving plate, leaving you frustrated and not knowing what to serve instead—and knowing you'll have to deal with scrubbing the mess out of the pan later.

But why does food stick? Well, food sticks to cookware for the same reason that a wine label sticks to a bottle. It might sound strange, but in both cases, there's glue. Most glues (whether manufactured or homemade) contain long molecules that bond well with certain surfaces. Think of them as ropes tightly knotted to two objects, keeping them firmly fixed together. And in the case of food sticking to pans, the glue is usually protein. During cooking, proteins in food can react to the surface of the pan, and these reactions literally glue the food to the dish.

Proteins make good glues because they're long molecules (strings of amino acids, really) that become chemically reactive when heated to 240°F (116°C) or hotter. When cooked, proteins change in structure and consistency, creating new flavors and textures in food. In the process, proteins form strong bonds with one another, as happens when we cook eggs, and also with metal, as happens when food gets stuck to the pan.

This doesn't just happen when you're using a metal pan. There are many metal atoms in the surfaces of glazed ceramics and even in glass, so nearly all traditional cookware is potentially prone to problems of food sticking.

Most food is susceptible to sticking—not only high-protein

foods like meat, fish, and eggs. Even foods that we think of as being starches, such as flour and rice, contain enough protein to make them stick.

Ways to prevent sticking

Now that we know the main cause of food sticking to pans (proteins in the food reacting with metal on the pan surface), the way to prevent sticking is clear: just make sure the proteins never come into direct contact with the pan's surface. Indeed, this is how all the traditional methods for preventing sticking actually work.

Stir the pot. People often find that thickened sauces such as gravy and béchamel sauce stick to the pan unless they're continually stirred. As long as you keep stirring the sauce, you keep the temperature uniform, and it will not get much hotter than the boiling point of water 212°F (100°C), even at the bottom surface. If you stop stirring, however, then water can boil away from the bottom, and the temperature can rise well above 212°F, allowing reactions between proteins and metal atoms to happen more quickly and more frequently.

Buy a nonstick pan. These days, many cookware manufacturers offer pots and pans with a “nonstick” finish. The coating is a layer of inert material bonded to the underlying metal. Most manufacturers use polytetrafluoroethylene or PTFE, which has a number of trade names including Teflon. PTFE simply will not react with the proteins no matter how hot the pan gets so food never sticks to the pan.

Nonstick pans work well, but if the PTFE layer is bonded to the pan's surface, it can gradually

Proteins as glues

Proteins have been used as glues since ancient times; the glues used in fine furniture were prepared from the proteins in animal bones and cartilage, while milk proteins were used to make paper glues. Many modern glues differ only slightly from the protein glues of old.

Airplanes are increasingly glued together, rather than riveted, so glues can make very strong bonds. This simple experiment shows just how strong protein glues can be: Take two pennies. Clean them with vinegar or lemon juice. Spread a thin layer of egg white on one penny and then place the second one on top. Now hold with tongs over a hot burner for a minute, or bake in the oven at 270°F for 10 minutes. Let them cool and then try to separate the two coins. You can't. They have become glued together. The same will happen, more or less, with any protein (eggs are just easily accessible).

wear away as you wash the pan, and once any metal is exposed, food will stick. Or, if you scratch the PTFE off the surface, then you may expose the metal underneath, converting it from a nonstick to a sticky pan. Recently some manufacturers have managed to incorporate PTFE particles inside the metal in an attempt to avoid this problem.

Make your own nonstick pans

You can always turn a sticky pan into a nonstick pan. The method depends on the type of pan and how it's used.

For baking...If you bake, you already know how to make cake and muffin pans nonstick by greasing the surface with butter and applying a dusting of flour or confectioners' sugar. The proteins from the eggs in the batter get trapped in the layer of flour or sugar and never get to the surface, so the cake never sticks. (If you just use butter with no flour, the butter will melt away, leaving the bare surface of the pan exposed, so there's still a chance the cake will stick.) This

step is always worth the trouble when baking—even with pans that you consider nonstick, just in case there's a scratch you haven't seen.

For cooking...The patina that builds up on carbon-steel woks and cast-iron skillets over years of use is another kind of nonstick finish you can make yourself. You can make a similar patina on stainless-steel or copper pans (but not tin-lined ones), but it's easiest and works best on iron and carbon-steel pans (the sort that rust easily and that you can pick up cheaply at restaurant-supply stores) because their surface is rough and porous, allowing the patina to form a bit thicker and adhere better.

There are a few ways to create a patina in a metal pan. With all of them, the goal is to get cooking fat to undergo a chemical reaction that creates a nonstick layer on the surface of the pan. When you heat cooking oil on a metal surface, it forms a film that's very similar to PTFE and, like PTFE, will not react with proteins.

What to do if a cake sticks

If you've greased and floured properly, a cake should release from the pan when you invert it onto a plate. If it doesn't, the best thing to do is to turn the tin and plate right way up and leave the cake to cool completely. The cake will be stronger when cool so there's less risk of it breaking when you try to extract it. To get the cooled cake out, gently slide a thin knife around the sides of the pan to free it. This, we hope, will be enough.

If the cake has stuck to the bottom of the pan, you'll have to try something more drastic. If you have time, freeze the cake in the pan overnight, so that the cake becomes hard (and quite strong). Then put the base of the pan in hot water for a minute or so to soften a thin layer at the bottom. Now invert the pan onto a plate and firmly strike the bottom with your hand, or if it's that sort of day, any available blunt instrument. This should release the bottom so the frozen cake can come out in a single piece.

Here's my preferred method: Heat the pan on the stove with a little light cooking oil in it until the oil starts to smoke. Reduce the heat to very low and let the pan sit for 5 minutes, keeping a watchful eye on it the whole time. Be careful as you do this, as the pan and oil are very hot. After letting the pan cool, wipe off the excess oil with a paper towel. Repeat two or three times to build up a nonstick layer, or patina, at the surface.

Some people recommend other methods, usually involving lower temperatures and longer times, but I prefer my method for its speed and also because the patina layer tends to be stronger.

The patina layer, however it's made, is vulnerable to detergents. So once you've created a patina, you might not want to wash these pans. After using mine, I just wipe the pan clean with a paper towel; and, occasionally, I heat oil in the pan to refresh the patina. All my favorite pans are coated in this way, and it gives a double advantage: I never have problems with food sticking. And I never have to wash the pans.

Peter Barham, the author of The Science of Cooking, is a reader in physics at The University of Bristol. ♦



FROM THE BACK COVER

For more information about the Martino family's sun-dried fruits, call 800-552-8218 or visit Bellaviva.com.

In Season, p. 16

Henry Fields (Henryfields.com; 513-354-1494) sells corn seed, including the old-fashioned, open-pollinated Golden Bantam.

Equipment, p. 22

Diva de Provence makes induction cooktops in 12-, 30-, and 36-inch sizes, ranging from \$2,000 to \$4,000; visit Divainduction.com. Viking offers 30- and 36-inch induction cooktops, as well as combination induction-electric cooktops, ranging from \$1,800 to \$3,100; visit Vikingrange.com. Gaggenau's new 15-inch induction cooktop will sell for \$3,300; visit Gaggenau-usa.com. Wolf's 15-inch induction cooktop will cost \$1,400; visit Wolfappliance.com. Heartland will bring out a

36-inch induction cooktop for about \$4,000; visit www.heartlandappliances.com. Küppersbusch's 18-inch induction wok cooktop retails for \$3,500; the 12-, 30-, and 36-inch flat cooktops they'll soon offer will range from \$1,400 to \$3,600; more at Kuppersbuschusa.com. Kenmore will bring out a four-burner induction cooktop, available in Sears stores this fall for \$1,500. Small, commercial-style portable induction cooktops are made by Cooktek and Diva de Provence; available at Selectappliance.com.

Fresh Tomato Pan Sauces, p. 34

The 11-inch cast-iron frying pan pictured on p. 35 is made by Staub. It costs about \$100 and is available at Cutleryandmore.com.

Whole Chicken on the Grill, p. 44

For chicken on the charcoal grill, you'll need mesquite lump charcoal. We like Lazzari brand, available in some supermarkets—or call the company (800-242-7265) to find out where to buy its charcoal in your area.



Ice Cream Pie, p. 66

For the ice cream pie, we used a Vollrath #40 (¾-ounce) ice cream scoop. You can find it for \$7.48 at Ace Mart Restaurant Supply (Acemart.com; 888-898-8079). To drizzle hot fudge sauce over the ice cream pie, a squirt bottle is handy. Try Chef Revival's "drizzlers," from \$1.30 at Chefrevival.com (800-352-2433).



From Our Test Kitchen, p. 68

To find wasabi paste or powder, try an Asian grocery, the Asian section of your supermarket, or an online source like Asianfoodgrocer.com (877-360-1855).

Good mail-order sources for capers and caper berries include Kalustyan's (800-352-3451; Kalustyans.com) and Chefshop (Chefshop.com; 877-337-2491). Chefshop also sells turbinado, dark muscovado, and demerara sugars in 3-pound containers for \$17.99. Light muscovado sugar is slightly harder to find online, but Zingermans.com (888-636-8162) does carry it, as well as 1-pound bags of demerara sugar for \$4.



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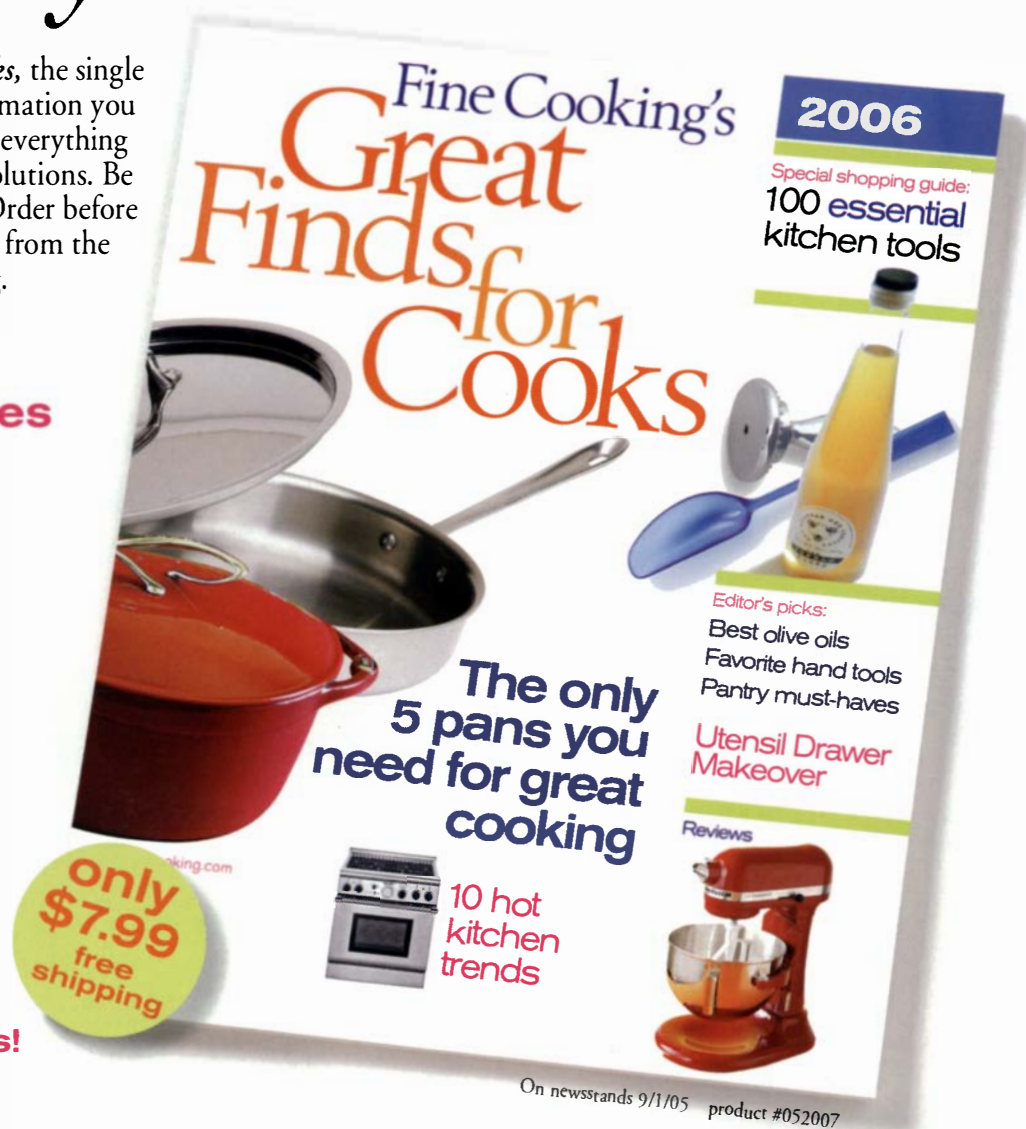
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Recipe	Page	Calories		Protein	Carb	Fats (g)				Chol.	Sodium	Fiber	Notes
		total	from fat	(g)	(g)	total	sat	mono	poly	(mg)	(mg)	(g)	(analysis per serving)
Summer Essentials		10a											
Lemon Oil		126	126	0	0	14	2	11	1	0	0	0	per 16 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Toasted Paprika Chile Oil		126	125	0	0	14	1	8	4	0	0	0	per 15 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Ginger Oil		126	124	0	1	14	1	8	4	0	0	0	per 17 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Mint & Basil Pesto		66	61	1	1	7	1	4	1	1	19	0	per 16 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Cilantro Peanut Pesto		51	44	1	2	5	1	2	2	0	89	0	per 19 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Sun-Dried Tomato Pesto		49	45	0	1	5	1	3	1	0	17	0	per 10 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Black Olive & Mint Vinaigrette		83	79	0	1	9	1	7	1	0	88	0	per 15 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Catalan Tomato & Parsley Vinaigrette		66	63	0	1	7	1	5	1	0	57	0	per 16 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Ginger-Sesame-Honey Lime Vinaigrette		38	30	0	1	3	1	2	1	0	399	0	per 17 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Memphis Spice Rub		23	9	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	448	2	per 7 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Chinese Five-Spice Rub		29	8	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	442	2	per 10 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Simple Steak Rub		31	7	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	231	2	per 9 g, approx 1 Tbs.
In Seasons		16											
Summer Corn Soup		196	82	4	28	9	2	5	1	7	158	4	based on 6 servings
Fresh Tomato Sauces		34											
Fresh Tomato & Basil Sauce		214	161	7	9	18	7	7	1	30	584	3	based on 5 servings, no pasta
Fresh Tomato Sauce w/Herbs & Olives		193	153	2	9	17	2	13	2	0	628	2	based on 5 servings, no pasta
Summer Amatriciana Sauce		164	118	5	8	13	3	4	1	16	655	2	based on 5 servings, no pasta
Tomato Sauce alla Siciliana		122	79	2	10	9	1	7	1	0	233	4	based on 5 servings, no pasta
Summer Picnic		38											
Yellow Tomato Gazpacho w/Avocado Salsa		205	158	3	11	18	2	13	2	0	337	2	based on 10 servings, w/o salsa
Avocado Salsa		49	41	0	2	5	1	3	0	0	49	1	per 31 g, approx 2 Tbs.
Lemony Artichoke & Caper Tuna Salad Sandwiches		584	158	31	73	18	3	12	2	34	1190	5	based on 6 servings
Moroccan Spiced Chicken Breast Sandwiches		234	36	18	32	4	1	1	1	37	586	2	w/o marmalade
Onion Marmalade		20	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	per 38 g, approx 2 Tbs.
Spicy & Citrusy Couscous Salad		346	189	6	34	21	3	15	3	0	308	4	based on 6 servings
Whole Grilled Chicken		44											
Grilled Chicken w/Caramelized Lemons & Rosemary		521	295	52	3	33	8	15	6	166	1089	1	based on 4 servings
Spicy Beer-Can Chicken on the Grill		415	188	41	13	21	6	8	5	127	1042	2	based on 6 servings
Burger with a Twist		48											
Argentine-Style Hamburger w/Chimichurri Sauce		706	426	42	28	47	12	29	4	126	867	5	based on 4 servings
Rustic Fruit Tarts		50											
Rustic Fruit Tart		315	151	4	38	17	10	5	1	81	192	2	based on 8 servings
Salads from the Grill		55											
Charred Onion Salad w/Prosciutto & Parmigiano Reggiano		337	155	9	37	17	3	11	1	13	669	3	based on 4 servings
Grilled Hearts of Romaine w/Blue Cheese Dressing		203	175	5	2	19	5	5	1	21	507	0	w/2 Tbs. dressing
Grilled Mushroom, Arugula & Comté Salad		329	242	8	18	27	6	18	2	16	380	3	based on 4 servings
Chopped Vegetable & Couscous Salad w/Black Olive Vinaigrette		281	155	5	28	17	2	13	2	0	319	4	based on 12 servings
Fresh Chiles		60											
Poblano & Ham Quesadillas		241	105	15	19	12	6	3	1	28	629	2	based on 8 servings
Green Chile Sauce		14	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	27	1	per 55 g, approx 2 Tbs.
Stacked Green Chile & Grilled Chicken Enchiladas		605	265	36	54	30	11	13	4	74	790	9	based on 4 servings
Sirloin Tacos		291	93	23	25	10	3	5	1	49	770	2	based on 8 servings
Roasted Tomato Salsa		7	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	107	0	per 32 g, approx 2 Tbs.
Ice Cream Pie		66											
Triple Chocolate Ice Cream Pie		495	309	7	48	34	20	6	1	90	190	3	based on 12 servings
From Our Test Kitchen		68											
Sweet & Sour Eggplant Relish		23	17	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	150	0	per 26 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Ancho Chile Harissa		58	44	1	3	5	1	3	1	0	93	1	per 14 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Lemon Herb Butter		70	67	0	1	8	5	2	0	20	25	0	per 14 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Chipotle Cilantro Butter		69	67	0	0	8	5	2	0	20	54	0	per 14 g, approx 1 Tbs.
Quick & Delicious		86c											
Grilled Salmon w/Wasabi Ginger Mayonnaise		350	180	39	1	20	3	4	5	111	464	0	w/1 tsp. Ginger Mayo
Bourbon & Brown Sugar Marinated Steak		394	110	38	22	12	5	5	1	65	2807	0	based on 4 servings
Pork Tenderloin w/Tequila Hot Pepper Glaze & Grilled Peaches		294	103	33	11	11	3	6	1	100	350	1	based on 6 servings
Mustard & Coriander Grilled Chicken Breasts		386	232	35	2	26	4	18	3	94	552	1	based on 4 servings
Baked Shrimp w/Fennel & Feta		407	205	35	13	23	7	12	2	241	1144	1	based on 4 servings
Steamed Mussels w/Lime & Cilantro		292	125	27	10	14	5	5	2	84	801	0	based on 8 servings
Potato Salad w/Green Beans, Artichokes, Red Peppers & Olives		484	268	11	44	30	7	20	3	15	844	5	based on 6 servings

The nutritional analyses have been calculated by a registered dietitian at Nutritional Solutions in Melville, New York. When a recipe gives a choice of ingredients, the first choice is the one used in the

calculations. Optional ingredients and those listed without a specific quantity are not included. When a range of ingredient amounts or servings is given, the smaller amount or portion is used. When the

quantity of salt and pepper aren't specified, the analysis is based on ¼ teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper per serving for entrées, and ⅛ teaspoon salt and ⅛ teaspoon pepper per serving for side dishes.

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Black Raspberry Lemon Pudding Pie



1 jar Dickinson's® Lemon Curd
1 jar Dickinson's® Pure Seedless Black Raspberry Preserves
Graham Cracker Pie Crust, prepared
2 small boxes Instant Vanilla Pudding Mix
1 3/4 c. Milk
1 8-oz. container Whipped Topping

In a large bowl, mix milk and pudding. Beat with a wire whisk till smooth. Stir Curd into pudding, then fold in whipped topping. Pour mixture into pie crust. Chill until set. Soften Preserves with a spoon, then spread on top of pie. Chill. Makes 6-8 servings. Our Lime Curd would also be great in this recipe!



Apple-Chipotle Shrimp



1 jar Dickinson's® Apple Butter
2 Tbsp. Dickinson's® Lime or Lemon Curd
1 Tbsp. Balsamic Vinegar
1 Tbsp. Olive Oil
1 Tbsp. Chipotle Sauce
1 tsp. Garlic, minced
1 1/2 lbs. Peeled & Deveined Shrimp, Tuna or Swordfish

Place all of the ingredients except the seafood in a food processor. Process until marinade is smooth. Place seafood in a large freezer storage bag & marinate 1-2 hours, turning occasionally. Grill or broil seafood. Pour marinade into a small saucepan & cook 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove, brush on seafood every 2-3 minutes while grilling/broiling. Discard marinade. Makes 6-8 servings.



Apple-Berry Salsa with Cinnamon Chips



1/2 jar Dickinson's® Apple Butter
1/2 jar Dickinson's® Pure Seedless Pacific Mountain® Strawberry Preserves
Chips: 2-3 lg. Flour Tortillas, Water,
1 Tbsp. Sugar, 1/2 tsp. Cinnamon

Preheat oven to 400°F. Brush tortillas with water. Combine sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle over tortillas; cut each tortilla into 8 wedges. Place wedges on cookie sheet. Bake 5-7 minutes or until golden brown. Remove and cool. Combine Apple Butter, Preserves, fruits, orange zest and juice in bowl. Serve fruit salsa with cinnamon chips. Makes about 3 cups of salsa.

Salsa: 2 Granny Smith Apples, cored & chopped, 1 or 2 Kiwi, peeled & chopped,
1 Orange (Zest & Juice)



Citrus Coconut Trifle



1 jar Dickinson's® Lemon or Lime Curd
1 jar Dickinson's® Pure Marion Blackberry Preserves
1 small box Instant Coconut Cream Pudding Mix, prepared as directed
1 10-oz. Pound or Angel Food Cake
1 8-oz. container Whipped Topping

Fold Curd into prepared pudding. Cut cake horizontally & spread with Preserves, then cut cake into 1" cubes. In a trifle dish, layer cake, pudding & whipped topping, in that order. Garnish with optional lime peel or mint leaves. Makes 8-10 servings. Try substituting with your favorite flavor of Dickinson's Preserves.



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The tastiest fruit dried in the sun

"The best dried fruit comes from the best fresh fruit—you just can't skimp on that," says Victor Martino.



Bursting with flavor, the Martinos' dried fruits are marketed under the name Bella Viva, after their daughters, Belle and Vivian.

Fruit that's dried in the sun instead of by machine has a caramelly, complex sweetness, says Victor Martino, a longtime fruit farmer in Modesto, California, whose sun-dried fruits are memorable for their intense, rich flavor. "It's more work this way," he acknowledges, "but it's worth it."

One reason their dried fruits taste so good, say Victor and his wife Angie, is that they're choosy about fruit varieties, only planting those that will thrive and yield the best-tasting fruits. Blenheim apricots, for example, don't grow well in the hot climes of their farm's Modesto location, but Goldensweets do. And not all fruits are right for drying. White peaches may taste heavenly eaten fresh, but when dried, they lack acidity to balance their sweetness, say the Martinos.

They're also picky about quality. While larger-scale operations often consign sub-par fruits to drying, the Martinos have always refused. Even with fruits destined for drying, they insist on perfect size, color, texture, and balance between acid and sugar. "Some years," says Victor, "almost 25 percent of our crop has gone to compost, because it just wasn't good enough to eat."

—Amy Albert, senior editor

For more information, see p. 82.



Left: Victor tastes Bing cherries drying in the sun to decide if they're ready for cold storage, and then for packing. Above: Angie, Vivian, and Belle sort dried cherries by hand, selecting the fruits that are good enough for market. All rejects get composted.

A Dozen Summer Essentials

Here's the key to jazzy weeknight meals—a stash of brightly flavored homemade condiments in the fridge to drizzle, dress, or rub

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Zesty oils

Lemon Oil

Yields 1 cup.

1 cup top-quality extra-virgin olive oil
Grated zest of 2 lemons (wash the lemons first and use a rasp-style grater for fine, feathery zest with no bitter pith)

Combine the olive oil with the zest in a glass jar. Let sit for at least 30 minutes to infuse. Store in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Drizzle on: Grilled swordfish, halibut, or shrimp; grilled asparagus or zucchini.

Use in: A vinaigrette for an arugula and fresh goat cheese salad; a marinade with fresh thyme or rosemary for chicken cutlets.

Fine Cooking #50, Ris Lacoste

Ginger Oil

Yields a scant 1 cup.

24 1/8-inch-thick slices peeled fresh ginger (from a 3 1/2-inch chunk), lightly crushed
1 cup canola oil

In a small saucepan, submerge the ginger in the oil and bring to a gentle simmer over medium-low heat. Simmer until the slices are crisp and brown around the edges, 3 to 4 minutes. Take the pot off the heat; remove the slices with a slotted spoon and discard. Let the oil cool to room temperature. Strain through a fine sieve lined with a triple layer of cheesecloth. Refrigerate in a sealed container for up to a week.

Drizzle on: Crab cakes; grilled scallops; green beans.

Dress up: Asian cole slaw; chilled soups.

adapted from Fine Cooking #1, Jackie Shen

Toasted Paprika Chile Oil

Yields a scant 1 cup.

1 Tbs. sweet Hungarian paprika
1 Tbs. dried red chile flakes
1 cup canola oil

In a small saucepan, combine the paprika, red chile flakes, and oil. Heat on medium low until the oil just barely comes to a simmer. Simmer until the paprika darkens (but don't let it burn), 1 to 2 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and let it cool to room temperature.

Strain through a fine sieve lined with a triple layer of cheesecloth. Refrigerate in a sealed container for up to two weeks.

Drizzle on: Grilled pizza or flatbread; grilled rib-eyes or other steaks.

Add to: Stir-fry sauces; Asian marinades.

Fine Cooking #73, Susie Middleton

Spicy rubs

Chinese Five-Spice Rub

Yields 1/2 cup.

2 Tbs. ground coriander
2 Tbs. hot chili powder
2 Tbs. dark brown sugar
1 Tbs. five-spice powder
1 Tbs. ground fennel seeds
1 Tbs. kosher salt
1 tsp. dried red chile flakes

In a small bowl, stir together all the ingredients. Store in an airtight container for up to two weeks.

Great on: Spareribs; country-style boneless ribs; pork loin; duck breasts; tuna steaks; shrimp; chicken thighs; eggplant.

Fine Cooking #56, Steve Johnson

Memphis Spice Rub

Yields 1/2 cup.

2 1/2 Tbs. hot chili powder
2 Tbs. ground cumin
1 Tbs. ground coriander
1 Tbs. kosher salt
1/2 Tbs. paprika
1/2 Tbs. dark brown sugar
1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1/4 tsp. cayenne

In a small bowl, stir together all the ingredients. Store in an airtight container for up to two weeks.

Great on: Baby back ribs; pork loin or tenderloin; pork butt; whole chicken; chicken breasts and thighs.

Fine Cooking #56, Steve Johnson

Simple Steak Rub

Yields a generous 1/3 cup.

2 Tbs. ground cumin
1 Tbs. dried oregano
1 Tbs. coarsely ground black peppercorns
1 Tbs. light brown sugar
1 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 1/2 tsp. sweet paprika
1 tsp. kosher salt

In a small bowl, stir together all the ingredients. Store in an airtight container for up to two weeks.

Great on: Strip steaks; skirt steak; flank steak; lamb chops; leg of lamb; chicken drumsticks; pork chops.

Fine Cooking #33, Molly Stevens

Saucy vinaigrettes

Black Olive & Mint Vinaigrette

Yields 1¾ cups.

½ cup pitted Kalamata olives
2 cloves garlic
1 Tbs. capers, rinsed
3 small shallots, thinly sliced (scant ¼ cup)
1 Tbs. grainy Dijon mustard
1 Tbs. chopped fresh mint
1 Tbs. chopped fresh marjoram (optional)
⅓ cup red-wine vinegar; more as needed
1 cup extra-virgin olive oil; more as needed
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

On a cutting board, mince together the olives, garlic, and capers; transfer to a bowl. Stir in the shallots, mustard, mint, marjoram (if using), and vinegar. Mix in the oil with a fork to make a loose vinaigrette (it needn't be emulsified). Season with salt and pepper, taste, and add more oil or vinegar if needed. Refrigerate for up to three days.

Spoon over: Grilled steak or fish.

Dress up: A salad of grilled onion, zucchini, tomato, and feta; a grilled lamb salad with hearty greens and couscous.

Fine Cooking #28, Steve Johnson

Ginger-Honey-Lime Vinaigrette

Yields 1¼ cups.

3 Tbs. minced fresh ginger
1½ tsp. minced garlic
¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
3 Tbs. dry sherry
¼ cup rice vinegar
⅓ cup fish sauce
2 Tbs. fresh lime juice
1 Tbs. honey
Few dashes hot sauce (optional)
Kosher salt to taste
1 Tbs. toasted sesame oil
¼ cup peanut oil

In a bowl, combine all the ingredients except the oils. Whisk in the sesame oil and then the peanut oil. Taste and add a bit more salt if you like. Refrigerate for up to ten days.

Spoon over: Grilled asparagus or zucchini; grilled chicken cutlets.

For dipping: Serve with steamed shrimp, spring rolls, or sesame chicken.

Fine Cooking #50, Ris Lacoste

Catalan Tomato & Parsley Vinaigrette

Yields about 2 cups.

1 clove garlic
1 tsp. kosher salt; more to taste
2 tsp. Dijon mustard
¼ cup sherry vinegar or red-wine vinegar
1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
¼ sweet onion, such as Vidalia, finely minced (about ¼ cup)
1 Tbs. capers, with their brine
2 cornichon pickles, finely chopped (about 2 Tbs.)
½ cup quartered grape (or cherry) tomatoes
3 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
Freshly ground black pepper

Finely chop the garlic on a cutting board. Sprinkle the salt over it and scrape the flat side of the knife over the garlic until

it's mashed to a paste. Scrape the garlic paste into a bowl. Add the mustard, vinegar, and 3 to 4 Tbs. water; whisk until the salt is dissolved. Gradually whisk in the oil in a thin stream: the sauce should thicken slightly. Whisk in the onion, capers, pickles, tomatoes, and parsley. Add salt and pepper to taste. Whisk well before serving. Refrigerate for five to seven days.

Spoon over: Slices of grilled sirloin; grilled scallops; roast chicken.

Dress up: A warm grain and shrimp salad; red potato salad.

Fine Cooking #51, Steven Raichlen

Punchy pestos

Sun-Dried Tomato Pesto

Yields a scant 1 cup.

⅓ cup chopped drained oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes
⅓ cup packed fresh basil leaves
⅓ cup packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
3 Tbs. pine nuts (lightly toasted, if you like)
2 Tbs. grated Parmigiano Reggiano
1 to 2 cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
Pinch kosher salt

Combine the ingredients in a food processor; process until it becomes a rough purée. Refrigerate for up to three days or freeze for up to a month.

Toss with: Rotini, toasted pine nuts, chopped grilled onions and more fresh basil for a great pasta salad.

Tuck under: Chicken skin before roasting.

Fine Cooking #38, Molly Stevens

Mint & Basil Pesto

Yields about 1⅓ cups.

1 cup tightly packed fresh mint leaves
1 cup tightly packed fresh basil leaves
⅔ cup grated Parmigiano Reggiano
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil; more as needed
¼ cup toasted pine nuts
2 large cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp. light brown sugar
2 Tbs. balsamic vinegar
¼ tsp. kosher salt; more to taste
¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper; more to taste

In a food processor, combine the mint, basil, cheese, oil, pine nuts, and garlic and pulse until the herbs are finely chopped but not puréed. Dissolve the brown sugar in the vinegar and add it to the pesto, along with the salt and pepper. Pulse again to combine. If the pesto seems dry, add more oil, 1 Tbs. at a time. Taste and add a little more salt and pepper if needed. Refrigerate for up to three days or freeze for up to a month.

Toss with: Cold or hot noodles; sautéed zucchini; grilled shrimp; boiled new potatoes.

Add to: A fresh mozzarella, cherry tomato, and corn salad.

Spread on: Pizza dough.

Fine Cooking #16, Loretta Keller

Cilantro-Peanut Pesto

Yields 1 cup.

2 cups loosely packed cilantro leaves and tender stems
⅓ cup unsalted roasted peanuts
1 clove garlic
1 fresh jalapeño, cored and seeded
3 scallions, trimmed and roughly chopped
1 Tbs. fish sauce
⅓ cup fresh lime juice
¼ cup peanut oil

In a food processor, combine the cilantro, peanuts, garlic, jalapeño, and scallion. Process to a rough paste. Add the fish sauce and lime juice; process until the sauce begins to turn creamy. With the motor running, slowly pour in the oil; process until combined. Refrigerate for up to three days or freeze for up to a month.

Serve with: Steamed or grilled shrimp.

Toss with: Rice noodles or shredded cabbage for Asian salads.

Stir into: Mayonnaise for chicken salad.

Fine Cooking #41, Molly Stevens ♦

BY MOLLY STEVENS

When the weather's warm

and the days are long, my favorite way to prepare dinner is outdoors on the grill. Instead of lengthy marinades or complicated spice rubs, I pick a few zesty ingredients to punch up the flavor of chicken, meat, or fish, and, in the time it takes for the grill to heat up, I can have everything ready to go. Whisking up a wasabi mayonnaise for salmon fillets, a tequila-hot-pepper glaze for pork, or a mustard-coriander coating for chicken transforms ordinary grilled fare into something worthy of an idyllic summer evening. And for those nights when you'd rather cook indoors, take the same approach to mussels and shrimp by intensifying them with a few flavors like lime, chiles, garlic, and fennel. You'll also find a novel main course in a potato salad chock full of bold summer flavors.



Grilled Salmon with Wasabi-Ginger Mayonnaise

Serves four.

1½ limes
½ cup mayonnaise
1½ Tbs. wasabi paste; more to taste
2 tsp. finely grated fresh ginger
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 6-oz. skinless salmon fillets
Vegetable oil for the grill

Prepare a medium-hot grill fire (be sure the grill grate has been scrubbed clean with a wire brush).

Cut the half lime into four wedges and set aside. Finely grate the zest from the whole lime. Cut the zested lime in half and squeeze the juice from one half into a small bowl (save the other half for another use). In a medium bowl, combine 1 tsp. of the lime juice with the lime zest, mayonnaise, wasabi paste, ginger, and ¼ tsp. salt. Stir to combine. Taste and add more wasabi paste if you'd like a zippier flavor.

Run your finger along each salmon fillet to feel for tiny bones; use tweezers or needlenose pliers to pull out

any that you find. Season the fillets lightly with salt and pepper. Spoon about 2 Tbs. of the mayonnaise mixture onto the salmon fillets and refrigerate the rest. With your hands, spread the mayonnaise in a thin layer over all sides of the fillets.

When the grill is ready, oil the grill grate using tongs and a paper towel dipped in oil. Grill the salmon until crisp and slightly charred on one side, about 4 minutes. Turn and continue to grill until the salmon is just cooked through, another 3 to 6 minutes. Serve the salmon topped with a dollop of the mayonnaise and a lime wedge on the side. Pass the remaining mayonnaise at the table.

Tip: You can find wasabi paste and powder at Asian groceries, or try the Asian section of your supermarket. For more information, see p. 76.



Mustard & Coriander Chicken Breasts with Lemon-Basil Vinaigrette

Serves four.

2 Tbs. Dijon mustard
2 tsp. lightly cracked coriander seeds
6 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves (6 to 8 oz. each)
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 tsp. fresh lemon juice
3 Tbs. roughly chopped fresh basil

Prepare a medium-hot grill fire. In a small bowl, whisk the mustard and coriander seeds. Whisk in 3 Tbs. of the olive oil. If the chicken breasts have the tenders attached, remove them and save for another use. Trim any excess fat from the breasts and then rinse and pat dry. Season the breasts with salt and pepper and rub them all over with the mustard-oil mixture.

When the grill is ready, grill the chicken until one side is nicely browned and grill marks appear, 2 to 3 minutes. (There may be some flare-ups at first; if they don't

go out, move the chicken off to the side until they do.) With tongs, rotate the breasts 90 degrees (to get a crosshatch of grill marks) and continue grilling until grill marks form and the sides of the breasts are fully opaque, another 2 to 3 minutes. Flip the breasts and grill in the same way until the second side is browned and the inside has just a trace of pink, another 4 to 6 minutes. Transfer to a clean cutting board, cover loosely with foil, and let rest for about 5 minutes. Meanwhile, whisk the remaining 3 Tbs. oil with the lemon juice, basil, ¼ tsp. salt, and a few grinds of pepper. Slice the chicken on an angle and serve drizzled with the vinaigrette.

Serving suggestion:

Serve with steamed green beans and store-bought focaccia or grilled bread rubbed with garlic and drizzled with olive oil.



Steamed Mussels with Lime & Cilantro

Serves four as a main course; eight as an appetizer.

4 lb. mussels
2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium carrot, peeled and cut into small dice
1 large fresh jalapeño, seeded and minced
2 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 Tbs.)
Finely grated zest and juice of 1 lime
½ cup dry white wine or white vermouth
½ cup heavy cream
⅓ cup loosely packed cilantro leaves and tender stems, coarsely chopped
½ to 1 tsp. Asian chile sauce, such as Sriracha, or other hot sauce (optional)
Kosher salt

Rinse the mussels in a colander under cold water, scrub the shells thoroughly, remove the tough, wiry beards, and discard any mussels with broken or gaping shells. While the mussels drain, heat the oil in a large, wide pot over medium-high heat. Add the carrot and jalapeño and sauté, stirring occasionally until they begin to soften and lightly brown, about 2 minutes. Add the garlic and ½ tsp. of the lime zest,

and continue to sauté until fragrant, 30 seconds. Pour in the wine and raise the heat to high. As soon as the wine boils, add the mussels and cover the pot. Steam the mussels, shaking the pot once or twice, until the shells open, 5 to 6 minutes.

Remove the pot from the heat. With a slotted spoon, transfer the mussels to a large bowl and keep warm. Return the pot with the cooking liquid to the heat, add the cream, and boil until the sauce reduces just a bit, 2 to 3 minutes. Add 1 ½ Tbs. of the lime juice, the cilantro, and the chile sauce, if using. Taste and add more lime juice and salt if needed. Ladle the mussels into wide, shallow bowls, pour some of the sauce over each portion, and serve immediately.

Serving suggestion:

Serve with crusty bread or rolls, or jasmine rice.



Bourbon & Brown Sugar Marinated Steak

Serves four.

½ cup soy sauce
⅓ cup bourbon or other whiskey
⅓ cup firmly packed brown sugar, preferably dark
1 Tbs. Dijon mustard
1 tsp. hot sauce, such as Tabasco
1½ to 2 lb. beef steak, preferably flank or 1½-inch-thick New York strip steaks

Prepare a medium-hot grill fire. Meanwhile, combine the soy sauce, bourbon, sugar, mustard, and hot sauce in a large zip-top bag. Seal and shake to combine the ingredients and dissolve the sugar. Add the steak to the bag, seal, massage to cover the steaks with marinade, and set aside for 15 to 20 minutes at room temperature.

When the grill is ready, remove the steak from the marinade and shake off any excess, but don't pat it dry. Reserve the marinade. Grill the steak until good sear marks appear, 3 to 4 minutes. With tongs, rotate the steak 90 degrees (to get a crosshatch of grill

marks) and continue grilling until grill marks form and the edges are a little crisp, another 3 to 4 minutes. Flip the steak and grill the other side in the same way until the exterior is nicely seared and the steak is cooked to your liking, 10 to 12 minutes total cooking time for medium rare. Let the steaks rest for about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, pour the marinade into a small saucepan and boil over medium-high heat until syrupy, about 3 minutes (watch carefully to prevent burning). For flank steak, slice the meat thinly across the grain. For strip steaks, slice thickly or serve in chunks. Serve with a drizzle of the sauce.

Serving suggestion:

Serve with grilled vegetable skewers.

Tip: You can marinate the steaks in the refrigerator for up to 2 hours before grilling. Just bring the steaks back to room temperature before grilling.



Baked Shrimp with Fennel & Feta

Serves four.

4 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
1½ cups ½-inch diced fennel bulb (about 1 small or ½ large)
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup dry white wine
1 14½-oz. can diced tomatoes, with their juices
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
½ cup fresh breadcrumbs
3 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
¼ lb. feta, crumbled (about ¾ to 1 cup)
1¼ to 1½ lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 425°F. In a 12-inch ovenproof skillet, heat 2 Tbs. of the olive oil over medium heat. Add the fennel and sauté, stirring occasionally until slightly softened and lightly browned, 7 to 8 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté until fragrant, 1 minute. Add the wine and bring to a boil. Add the tomatoes and their juices, season with salt and pepper, and stir to heat

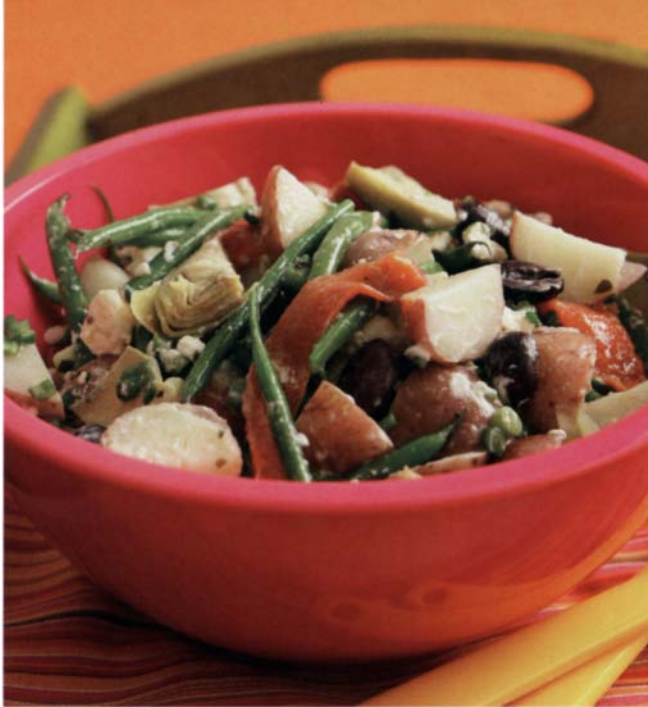
through. Using a wooden spoon or spatula, spread the tomato mixture into an even layer in the skillet.

In a small bowl, stir the breadcrumbs, parsley, feta, the remaining 2 Tbs. olive oil, and salt (about ½ tsp., depending on the saltiness of the feta) and pepper to taste. Arrange the shrimp in a single layer on the tomato mixture, and sprinkle with the breadcrumb mixture. Bake until the shrimp are cooked through and the cheese is melted, 12 to 15 minutes.

Serving suggestion:

Serve with rice or orzo.

Tip: If possible, use the best Greek, French, or Bulgarian feta cheese you can find.



Potato Salad with Green Beans, Artichokes, Red Peppers & Olives

Serves four as a light lunch or six as a side dish.

- 2 Tbs. red-wine vinegar**
- ½ tsp. dried oregano**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- ⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- ½ lb. green beans, trimmed and cut into 2-inch lengths**
- 1½ lb. red-skinned potatoes, scrubbed and cut into ¾-inch pieces**
- 4 to 5 scallions, finely chopped, white and green parts separated**
- 1 14-oz. can water-packed artichoke hearts or bottoms, drained and quartered**
- ½ cup roasted red pepper strips (about 3 oz.), cut into 2-inch pieces**
- ½ cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved**
- ½ cup crumbled goat cheese**

Combine the vinegar and oregano in a small bowl; season with salt and pepper. Whisk in the olive oil and taste for seasoning.

Bring a large saucepan of well-salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the beans and boil until just tender, about 4 minutes. Using a strainer, scoop out the beans and rinse under cold water.

Let the water in the saucepan come back to a boil. Add

the potatoes and simmer, adjusting the heat as necessary, until the potatoes are tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Drain and transfer the potatoes to a large bowl; add the white parts of the scallions, drizzle on a few teaspoons of the dressing, and toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Set aside to cool slightly.

When ready to serve, add the green parts of the scallions, the green beans, artichokes, red peppers, olives, and goat cheese to the potatoes. Pour over the remaining dressing and toss to combine. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve.

Tip: For a dressier presentation, make the potato salad with only the scallions, olives, and feta. Then dress the beans, artichokes, and peppers individually (you'll need a double batch of dressing). Line each plate with a few leaves of bibb lettuce drizzled with dressing, and arrange all the elements artfully on top. If you like, add a bit of canned tuna or cooked chicken.



Pork Tenderloin with Tequila-Hot Pepper Glaze & Grilled Peaches

Serves four to six.

- 3 Tbs. hot pepper jelly**
- 2 Tbs. silver or gold tequila**
- 2 Tbs. orange or pineapple juice**
- 1 tsp. finely grated orange zest**
- 2 pork tenderloins (1 to 1¼ lb. each), trimmed of excess fat and silverskin and patted dry**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 to 3 medium-size firm-ripe peaches or nectarines, sliced in half, pits removed**
- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**

Prepare a medium-hot grill fire. In a small bowl, whisk the jelly, tequila, orange or pineapple juice, and orange zest. Generously season the pork with salt and pepper. Coat the pork and the peaches with a thin film of the olive oil.

If using charcoal, bank the coals so that one side of the grill is cooler. Grill the pork over the hotter side of the grill, turning it until all sides develop grill marks, about 2½ minutes per side. Move the pork to the cooler side of the grill (on a gas grill, lower the heat to medium or medium low) and brush the

pork all over with the glaze. Cover the grill or set a disposable aluminum pan over the pork. Grill for 5 minutes and then turn once and brush again with the glaze. Cover and continue grilling until the pork's internal temperature reaches 145°F, about another 5 minutes. Brush the pork with the glaze again, transfer it to a clean cutting board, and cover it loosely with foil to rest for about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, grill the peaches, cut side down, over the hotter part of the grill (on a gas grill, raise the heat to medium high) until grill marks appear, 3 to 4 minutes. Turn the peaches over and brush with the glaze. Continue grilling until warmed through, about another 3 to 4 minutes.

Carve the pork into 1- to 2-inch slices and arrange on a platter with the peaches. Sprinkle lightly with salt, drizzle with any leftover glaze and juices from the pork, and serve.

Serving suggestion:
Serve with rice pilaf or a couscous salad.